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Mary of Scotland
A Drama



MARY OF SCOTLAND,

OR

THE HEIR OF AVENEL.

A Drama,

IN THREE ACTS.

FOUNDED ON THE POPULAR NOVEL OF "THE ABBOT,"

*And originally performed at the Theatre, New-York, with
universal applause.*

New-York:

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Southern District of New-York, ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-third day of May, in the forty-fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, HENRY I. MEGAREY, of the said District, have deposited in this Office, the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, *to wit*:

Mary of Scotland, or the Heir of Avenel. A Drama, in three acts. Founded on the popular novel of "The Abbot," and originally performed at the Theatre, New-York, with universal applause.

In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" And also, to an Act, entitled, "An Act, supplementary to an Act, entitled, an Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

G. L. THOMPSON,
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

P.M.

1 2 3 4

PREFACE.

THE following piece was hastily sketched with a view to determine how far the progressive interest, and diffused action, of "The Abbot" could be concentrated so as to produce dramatic effect, and also to ascertain the disposition of the public to encourage indigenous efforts. However the author may have succeeded in the former of these objects, the issue of the attempt has proved that, if so few American plays are exhibited on the stage, the cause is not so much to be sought for in the dearth of patronage, as in the absence or indolence of that genius which is necessary to call it into action. The success of "Mary of Scotland," on its first representation, was universal and unequivocal, and this auspicious result will induce a series of dramatic productions from the same pen, so long as they may be warranted by the kindness of managers and the public.

To Mr. SIMPSON, the acting manager, whose ready acquiescence in every suggestion received new value from the gentlemanly politeness by which it was accompa-

nied, the author owes much for that attention to the stage arrangements, without which no drama can be made effective.

The performers, generally, are entitled to the thanks of the author for the earnestness with which, amidst an extraordinary pressure of demands on their time and talents, they applied themselves to the task of obtaining their several parts. Mr. MAYWOOD's personation of Roland Græme perfectly embodied the author's conception of the character. It was chaste, natural, and effective, the usual features of that gentleman's performance. Mr. MAYWOOD is a poetical actor, and can enter into a poet's feelings; and to the friends of correct taste and unaffected nature it must be a source of increasing gratification, that his style is becoming daily more and more understood and estimated, and promises fair to put down that system of drawling declamation and sordid trickery which has so long imposed on mankind.

Mr. SIMPSON's Douglas was eminently true. Mrs. BARNES looked, moved, and spoke the interesting Mary with prodigious effect; and Miss JOHNSON, in the lively and lovely Catherine, was all that could be wished.

New-York, May 21, 1821.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR.

Another novelty ! Nay—pray be civil ;
I'm sure you can't think novelty an evil.
Though, in good truth, so sickly is the town,
That novelty itself will scarce go down—
Have we not brought out tragedies by scores,
To draw dear patronage within our doors—
Wallace, Mirandola, and next, to cram
Your sated appetites, a melo-drame ?—
They did but little—pathos, point, and passion
The stage and all its arts were out of fashion.
Once more we try—for still, in reason's spite,
Actors must strut and storm, and bards must write.
Once more we struggle, 'ere the season ends,
To mend our prospects and increase our friends.
No scenic pageantry, nor tragic might,
Assists the efforts of our bard to-night.
No pomp of verse, nor sophistries profound,
Nor rank ideas heated into sound—
A tale of other lands and other times,
Of sovereigns' wrongs and politicians' crimes
Our drama shows, and if our feeble stage
Revive the memory of that olden age,
And cause again those frequent tears to flow
Which generous eyes have wept for Mary's woe,
We cry content, and greet the welcome cause
Which brings once more your presence and applause.



PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND, AND SPOKEN BY MRS. BARNES.

To brilliant eyes, that love to read,
And feeling hearts, that pant and bleed
O'er the wild scenes of mortal strife—
Drawn by the pencil to the life—
A mystic genius waves his pen,
And days long fled, come back again.
In mountain Scotia's classic land,
The bold UNKNOWN uplifts his wand.
And waving, as the scene's unfurl'd,
Throws his *Enchantment* o'er a world.
Lo ! through the twilight of the past,
What airy forms are coming fast?
Spirits come—and spirits go—
There's *Jenny Dean* and *Ivanhoe*!
Rob Roy, and all his clans appear,
The battle's din assails our ear—
Swift from the hills—where the wild deer are grazing,
Down from the crag—where the beacon is blazing—
“ While war steeds are bounding,
“ And trumpets are sounding —
They stand to their arms ! and they march in good order,
As the bonny blue bonnets come over the *Border*.
“ Soldiers and knights appear in dread array—
“ Bearing wild war and havoc in their way :
“ Nobles and statesmen of the ancient time,
“ Castles and banners fill the scene sublime ;
“ Heroes and queens, as called by him, revive,
“ And all the illustrious dead's again alive.
Drawn from these magic scenes—the play to night
Paints Mary—Queen of Scotland's hapless flight ;

" That queen whose youthful beauty, so 'tis said,
" Fired many lovers' hearts, and turn'd their head—
" And, sadder still, a truth to all well known
" At last, poor hapless creature, *turned* her own.
Yet who that sees this splendid, bright-eyed queen
Caged in a Castle, on Loch Leven's Green,
In darkness, watching from her prison-grate
The signal lights that tell her coming fate ;
Or, when the battle's lost, she waves her hand
And faintly cries—" Good night my native land,"
Feels not the witchery of her dazzling charms,
And *doubly* shares in all her hopes alarms.

By that fountain—on the mountain—

Near yon shade of Holly-Green,
Lowly bending—slow descending—
A mystic form in White is seen.

Spirit of the Chrystal well !

Shade of lofty Avenel !

O'er all our drama breathe thy charm awhile,
That we, this night, may win—our Patron's smile.
Oh ! let it not be said the opening bloom
Of native genius withers here in gloom ;
" Rouse up the town—revive the drooping heart
" Of the true votaries to the scenic art ;
Support our author's, and our drama's cause,
Send us rich houses, and your full applause.

EPILOGUE.

CATHARINE SEYTON, ROLAND GRÆME, AND
ADAM WOODCOCK.

Roland. (as he enters)

Cowards and slaves! Had there been ten to one,
To parley and cry "terms," were basely done!
By my good sword—

*Adam. Nay, master dear, be quiet:
It is not decent here to make a riot.*

*Rol. Well then, good Adam, since our toils are past,
And this fair dame consents—*

Cath. Not quite so fast!
A word or two friend Adam,—tell the truth—
You've known this scape-grace from his early youth;
What are the creature's points, as jockies say?—

Rol. Nay, Catharine! Hark ye, knave!
Cath. I'll have my way—
So prithee, page, be still His head, good Adam—

Adam. For ever running into quarrels, madam.

Rol. Sirrah, your head shall suffer.

Cath. Aye, indeed!
But not while I stand by. Adam, proceed—
Freakish, no doubt?—Wild as an unbroke colt?

Adam. He broke my head, my lady!—

Rol. Silence, dolt!

*Adam. Nay, sir, you know you did!—because, forsooth,
Touching hawk's diet I declared the truth.*

Cath. He can't deny it, Adam!—

Rol. Heaven forbid!

Adam. My tell-tale poll would poze you if you did.

EPILOGUE.

Ral. Forget it, Adam!—if my youth was wild,
Charge not to man the follies of the child.
Thou lovest me well, and shalt be falconer still.

Adam. And feed the hawks, good sir, which way I will.

Rol. Just as thou wilt; and have no future fears;
Thy rights shall all be sacred—and thy ears!
And now, fair lady—

Cath. Aye, Sir Choleric, now!

Rol. Nay, let no frown obscure that angel brow.
'Twere a bad precedent to night, for see
How many brows might catch that frown from thee.

Cath. Well, here's my hand—the Author else may say
We stood here quibbling till we damn'd the play.
And now, good Critics, if a woman's prayer
Can move your stern philosophy to spare,
Decide with charity,—our anxious bard,
If you refuse to smile, reaps no reward.

Adam. Now let me speak, and, with your pardon,
Madam!—

I can do much; most folks are fond of Adam!—
If you approve the drama, kindly greet it,
And fill the house, kind friends, when we repeat it.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

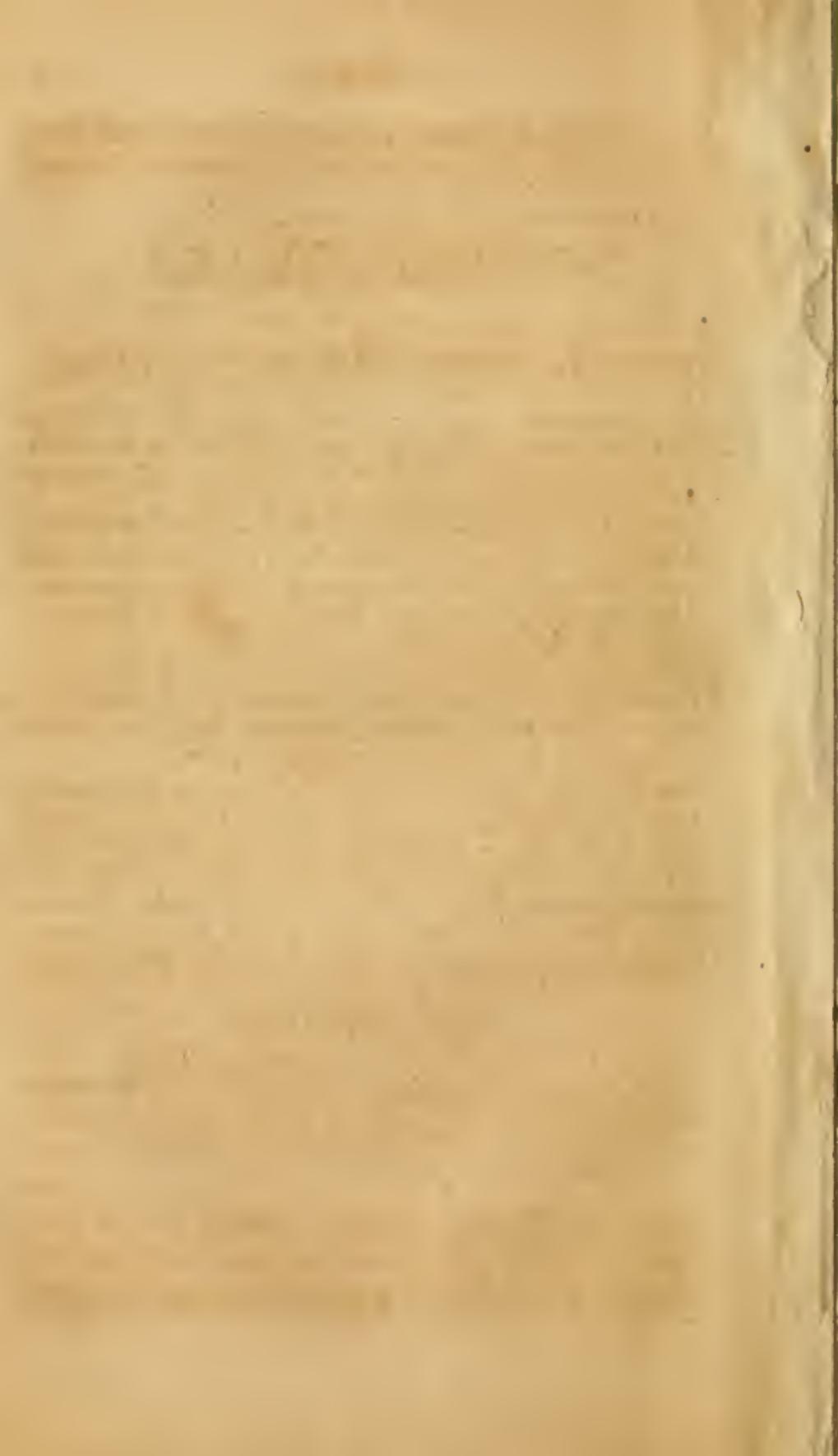
Lord Lindesay,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Moreland.
Lord Ruthven,	-	-	-	-	Bancker.
Lord Seyton	-	-	-	-	Anderson.
Sir Halbert Glendinning,	-	-	-	-	Reed.
Father Ambrose,	-	-	-	-	Woodhull.
Roland Græme,	-	-	-	-	Maywood.
George Douglas,	-	-	-	-	Simpson.
Adam Woodcock,	-	-	-	-	Kilner.
Luke Lundin,	-	-	-	-	Barnes.
Wingate,	-	-	-	-	Spiller.
Veniam,	-	-	-	-	Nexsen.

Lords, Officers, Peasants, &c.

Queen Mary,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Barnes.
Lady Lochleven,	-	-	-	-	Kilner.
Lady Fleming,	-	-	-	-	Miss Dellinger.
Catharine Seyton,	-	-	-	-	Johnson.
Magdalen Græme,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Baldwin.
Mrs. Lilius,	-	-	-	-	Parker.
White Lady of Avenel,	-	-	-	-	Miss Jones.

SCENE.—SCOTLAND.

The lines marked with inverted commas, are omitted in the representation.



ACT. I.

SCENE I.—*Steward's Room in Avenel Castle.*

WINGATE and Mrs. LILIAS, sitting at a table with wine and sweetmeats. Adam Woodcock at a little distance, nursing his leg and singing.

Mrs. Liliás. (*sipping her wine.*) Well, Master Wingate, thank heaven we have got rid of this Roland Græme at last! We may now take our drop of Canary in peace; so here's to his good journey!

Wingate. Amen! Yet I wish him no ill, not I.

Mrs. L. He's gone like a wild duck as he came; no lowering of bridges, nor pacing of causeways for him.

ADAM WOODCOCK, *rocking in his chair and singing.*

“The Friars of Fail drank berry-brown ale,
“The best that ere was tasted;
“The Monks of Melrose made gude kale,
“On Fridays when they fasted.”

Mrs. L. Heyday, Adam, “what fashes you man?” Won’t you take a glass, and drink a merry journey to the saucy loon who knocked

you into the cistern for maintaining that the hawks' should feed on unwashed flesh?

ADAM, *singing.*

"Saint Morance sister,
The gray priest kist her—
 Fiend save the company!
Sing hey trix,
Trim go trix,
 Under the greenwood tree."

Mrs. L. Heaven save us! Why the man's
daft or deaf! Did I take the trouble to make
all this mischief between my Lady and Roland,
because of the blow he gave you, and now you
refuse to show a little decent gratitude, by mak-
ing merry with us at the churl's departure.

ADAM, *singing.*

"From haunted spring and grassy ring,
 Troop, goblin, elf, and fairy"—

I'll tell you what it is, Mrs. Lilius—may be he
did hit me a rough blow, and may be I would
rather have taken it from him than a rough word
from another, for he had a good notion of fal-
conry, though he did stand up for washing the
meat for the eyasses. Dang it, I'm a York-
shireman, and have no memory for old sores!
I see no great cause for merriment at his depar-
ture.

Win. Thou art correctly sagacious, Adam,
and sagaciously correct. Those who have lived
as long in great families as I have, will be in no

hurry to rejoice at any thing. And for Roland Græme, though he may be a good riddance, what says the Scotch proverb, Mrs Lilius—"Seldom comes a better!"

Mrs. L. "Seldom comes a better," indeed. I say, never can come one half so bad. He might have been the ruin of our poor dear mistress, body and soul, (*puts a handkerchief to her eyes*) and estates too, for she spent more coin on his apparel, than on any four servants about her; and he had very nigh brought papistrie among us, for what should I see in his room but a string of gold beads! I promise you—*aves* and *credos* both! I seized on them like a falcon, and here they are.

ADAM, sings.

"And the kelpie must flit from the black-bog pit,
"And the brownie must not tarry."

"Right proper, popish beads they are," and such as I have seen with Father Ambrose, only these are more precious.

Win. They may weigh four ounces of fine gold. I pray heaven there may not be the trouble about them that there was, in time of old, about the black volume with the clasps.

Mrs. L. Eh, Master Wingate, what was that?

Win. Why, have you never heard, Mrs. Lilius, of the old tradition in the family, of the White Lady of Avenel, and the mysterious book!

Adam. (*aside*) Now the old steward's on his hobby, and the waiting-woman as eager for a tale, as an unhooded falcon for a flight.

Mrs. L. (*looking round her fearfully*) Never, Master Wingate.

Win. It is believed that the right heir of this castle is alive, and until he gains his right, the spirit of the house of Avenel will not lie at rest. But you shall hear. When Sir Halbert was a boy, the White Lady appeared to him, as she had previously done to Philip the Sacristan, and Father Eustace, the sub-prior, afterwards Abbot of Kennaquhair, who both attempted to steal a book from our lady's mother, for the which the Sacristan got a sound ducking, and the sub-prior was knocked from his horse, and the book, in both cases, was returned.

Adam. I doubt me much whether she will take the same trouble to win back the gold beads; seeing that neither bead nor cowl could protect the two fathers from her vengeance.

Win. I would have you to dispose of them straightway, Mrs. Lilius, to prevent accidents.

Mrs. L. They shall misguide no more poor souls, for I'll have them melted into a pair of shoe-buckles. I would not wear the Pope's trinkets one inch above my in-step, were they diamonds instead of gold. I thought what would come of Father Ambrose sneaking about the castle every day.

Adam. Hush, Mrs. Lilius, Father Ambrose is our master's brother, and Sir Halbert loves him next to our mistress, although they disagree in religion.

Win. And I verily believe there may be worse folks than Father Ambrose, though he is a—

Mrs. L. I wonder where you'll find them;

but I believe, Mr. Wingate, if one were to speak to you about the devil himself, you would say there were worse people than Satan.

Win. Assuredly, I might say so, if I saw Satan at my elbow.

Mrs. L. (*starting and screaming*) Lord bless us ! I wonder you can take pleasure in frightening one thus !

ADAM, sings.

“ To Limbo Lake
“ Their way they take,
“ With scarce the pith to flee.”

Win. I did not mean to frighten you, Mrs. Li-lias ; but listen, and you, Adam, come nearer. The Monk party are down for the *present*, but who knows how long that *present* will last ? If Queen Mary should come in again, down goes the Earl of Murray, our master’s patron, and down goes our master himself, and who so like to mount into his saddle as Father Ambrose.—The Pope may release him from his vows, and we should then have Sir Edward the soldier, instead of Ambrose the priest. Now do you understand why I suffered the Monk to have frequent conferences with Roland Græme ?

ADAM, sings.

“ Sing hey go trix,
“ Trim go trix,
“ Under the greenwood tree.”

Mrs. L. What, Master Wingate, have you
1*

eaten my mistress's bread, not to say my master's, who is himself base-born, and owes all to my lady, for so many years, that you could live to think of her being dispossessed of her own Castle of Avenel by a Monk, who is not a drop's blood to her, by way of relation. Though a woman, I would try if my rock or his cowl were better metal first.

Win. Not so loud, Mrs. Lilius, not so loud. I only spoke of peradventures. But I have a choice bottle of Canary in my private closet, full sixteen years old, and if you will go and taste it, we will talk further of this matter, and drink to our Lady of Avenel.

Mrs. L. That I will, Master Wingate, and may she never want a faithful major-domo like you, nor an affectionate waiting-woman—

Win. Like Mistress Lilius. Well imagined.

[*Exeunt Wingate and Mrs. Lilius.*]

ADAM, sings.

“ To Limbo Lake

“ Their way they take”—

To the devil with you both—one for as arrant a mischief-maker as ever put pin in a lady's ruff, and the other for as time-serving a rascal as ever kept the key of a wine cellar. I'll take my falcon, and away after Mr. Roland; mayhap he may want a little money, and I've thirty good Harry groats in my pouch, which he shall share with me. To be sure he struck me, but I can't be like some of the Scots, who can be fair and false, and wait their time, and keep their mind,

as they say, to themselves, and touch pot and flagon with you, and hunt and hawk with you, and after all, when time serves, pay off some old feud with the point of the dagger. I can't bear malice against him, for though nobody knows who begot him, and he has a spice of the devil in his disposition, he always had a kind heart, and a proud spirit far above his station.

[*Exit. singing.*

“ And rather would Allan in dungeon lie,
 “ Than live at large where the falcon can’t fly ;
 “ And Allan would rather be in Sexton’s pound,
 “ Than live where he follow’d not the merry hawk and
 hound.”

SCENE.—*Interior of the Monastery of St. Mary’s.*

Distant voices chaunting a requiem. A knocking at the gate of the Monastery—the chant ceases.

Enter FATHER AMBROSE, followed by VENIAM.

Father A. What hand profane disturbs the solemn mass,

And bids the requiem pause? Good Veniam, to the gate. [*Exit Veniam.*

A herald, perhaps; some greedy heretic Charg’d with unhallowed power. Too well we know

Ambitious Morton’s views—the fiefs—the rights—

All temporalities of Kennaquhair,
 To feed a brother's lust. Oh! sacred mother,
 Avert the ruin from thy holy shrine.
 " Let not the impious arm of secular pride
 " Lay waste thine altar, nor from drunken feasts
 " The red debasing draught defile the tombs,
 " And mingle with the reliques of thy children."

Enter VENIAM.

Ven. A wandering brother of our faith.

Father A. Admit him. [Exit *Veniam*.]

A cell among the ruins, and a seat
 To share the scanty board which crafty fraud,
 And loftier violence have deign'd to leave us,
 Are our's to proffer still.

Re-enter VENIAM and DOUGLAS disguised as a Monk. Exit *VENIAM*.

Father A. Welcome, brother. (*Douglas suddenly throws open his friar's habit, and discovers himself.*) Do my eyes deceive me?
 Has aught befel the queen? Speak, gallant Douglas.

Doug. Thank heaven! the sacrilegious hand
 . of treason

Has not profaned as yet that sanctuary
 " In which seraphic sweetness, dignity,
 " Grace, beauty, love, incomparable wit,
 " Associate with a mind of matchless worth,
 " Blend all their properties."

Father A. Remains she still—

Doug. Lochleven's prisoner! Watch and
 ward kept round her,

"On the mann'd walls the mounted culverins,
 "And sordid spies, like base obnoxious reptiles,
 "Crawling about her steps." Oh ! it galls me
 sore

To see a mother of the Douglas race
 Playing the gaoler's part.

Father A. Lady Lochleven hates the queen.

Doug. Too well I know't good Ambrose—
 Before Mar's daughter married with a Douglas
 (Oh that this tongue should dwell upon her
 frailty !)

By the beguiling vows of perjur'd Jaines
 Won to his lewd desires—why should I dwell
 on it ?

You know the Regent Murray was the fruit,
 While Mary, springing from a lawful bed,
 When James, forgetful of his former plight,
 Took to his arms a Guise, not for herself,
 But for her envied mother's better fortune
 Is hated by the Douglas mother.

Father A. The queen's religion too ! The
 Lady Douglas

Holds faith with those whose persecuting fury
 Has made the Virgin's altars desolate,
 O'erthrown our saints, our convent lands seque-
 ter'd—

Doug. Father, enough of this ! The queen
 shall find

There is a Douglas yet in whose warm breast
 Faith, loyalty and love—for who can dwell
 Within the vortex of those heavenly graces,
 And still retain the mastery of his soul—
 Struggle for freer scope and enterprize
 Equal to their devotion. Now to my business !

The plan of Mary's friends to break her thraldom
You know, good Ambrose.

Father A. I do, brave youth !
And every prayer the morn or vesper breeze
Bears from my lips, wafts to the Virgin's law
My soul's first earthly wish for its success—

Doug. Even now, I journey homeward from
the south :
'The Flemings, Hamiltons, Northumbria's Earl,
And all the well-affected of the borderers,
I have advis'd, that at the appointed cue
Their faith and courage may be tested.

Father A. What part devolves on me ?
Doug. You shall hear !
To shew myself in Edinburgh, now throng'd
Full to a surfeit with the base retainers
Of traitorous Murray ; where, at every corner,
Some courtly knave might recognize a Douglas—
Were to excite suspicion. Yet the queen
Has sturdy friends there, whose bright swords
remain

Inactive but from lack of fit occasion
Effectively to act !—

Father A. The Seytons, Douglas ?
Doug. The very same. This packet which
contains

The detail of our plan, the time, the manner,
And agents of its execution ; and more,
The common signal for co-operation,
Must by some trusty herald be conveyed
To those whose legal courage, apt and eager,
But tarries for the word.

Father A. I have it, Douglas :
Not more remote from this our monastery

'Than its own shadow in the sun, there dwells
A lonely sister ; not the concentered vigour
Of stern devoted faith these ruined walls
Inclose within their limits, can compete
With her's alone. "Penance, and peril too
" Which even the sturdiest brother of our order
" Would scare from its encounter, as the firm oak
" Receives the o'ercharg'd tempest's thundering
 fury,

" Her spirit meets unshrinking."

Doug. Whence comes she ?

Father A. From the disputed land. Inquire
 no further.

Did not confession's seal close up my lips
I would say more.

Doug. To doubt your tried discretion
Would be an ill requital of your love.
'Twere well, perchance, I knew her name,
But as you will, good father !

Father A. Magdalen Graeme !

Her lofty port, her stern forbidding mien,
The wild and dauntless character of soul
Which flashes from her eye, and, above all,
Her calm contempt of bodily jeopardy,
Have gain'd her from the slanderous populace
The reputation of a witch.

Doug. Enough !

To your disposal I entrust the packet.

" Time presses ; and each moment unimprov'd,
Leaves a reproach behind." Yet ere we part,
A word or two upon another subject.
Eustace is dead ! Even as I entered here,
The dying cadence of the solemn mass
Broke on my ear. What daring hand will seize

The browless mitre and the pastoral staff
Which Morton craves ?

Father A. Already in a chapter of our order
Election has been made ; and Kennaquhair
To night invests me with the sacred symbols.

Doug. Be sure it be to night ! To give you joy,
Is but to greet the martyr to the stake ;
The victim to the altar and the knife
Which drinks his blood. Delay it not an hour !
The installation o'er, your brother's influence
May work on Murray to confirm the act,
And Morton to concede his claim.

Father A. And should it not, the mother of
the church
Shall give the glittering crown of martyrdom
To him who proves, by faith inflexible,
And scorn of corporal suffering, his just claim
To such eternal recompence. But come ;
You need refreshment ; and tho' our refectory
Will poorly rival proud Lochleven's tables,
Our frugal fare is blessed. Come, my son.

Doug. I follow you, my father. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*The interior of Cuthbert's cell.*

*A broken image lying by its pedestal—a fractured
crucifix, and other fragments—windows broken
—entrance behind through broken arches.*

*Enter ROLAND GRÆME, dejected, his arms folded.
The deer reposes in his lair ;—the wolf
Through tangling forests finds his secret den ;—
Deep in the hollows of the rugged cliffs*

The eagle has her nest ;—aye, even the viper—
 That sordid reptile in whose slimy coil
 Venom engenders—knows his resting place :—
 While I, like a sear'd leaf, in autumn storms,
 Reft from what tree I know not, here and there,
 By every breath am buffeted and driven.

“ Yon saucy churl, who pass'd me by the way,
 “ Must tauntingly demand—whither I shap'd
 “ My tardy steps ? ‘ Perchance,’ quoth he, ‘ our
 father

“ ‘ May find some new preferment.’ It was well,

“ Well for the clown, perhaps for myself ’twas
 well,

“ I had not touch'd my dagger's hilt, when
 Woodcock,

“ Whose falcon thrice had brush'd my plume,
 appear'd,

“ And down the glen the villain slunk away.”

All gracious Virgin ! when these trembling lips
 Breathe forth the sound of “ father”—is there
 none

In all this wide, and animated earth

Whose heart will give response ? Base born I
 am not !

My swelling soul,—these high aspiring thoughts—
 The index in my bosom whose bright finger
 Points to an indistinct but certain light
 Gilding the horizon of my distant years—
 Repel the withering imputation ! Yet
 What I am I know not. “ In my brain
 “ A chaos wild of images and things
 “ Perpetual confusion.” (*looking round.*) Dese-
 lation !

Congenial ruin ! Fit companionship !

Grant me a fleeting refuge! "What do I see?"
(approaching the broken cross.)

Holy Saint Cuthbert! what unhallowed hands
 Have done this sacrilege? What impious fury
 Outrag'd the sacred badge of our redemption?
 Oh! that this arm could rear the broken cross!

*(He stoops and employs himself in replacing
 the crucifix in its socket.)*

Enter from an archway behind, MAGDALEN
 GRÆME, who stands for a few sesonds, surveying
 the exertions of Roland.

Mag. Well done, thou true and faithful! Thus,
 again;
 Thus would I meet thee! "I have watch'd and
 wept,
 "And with long prayer and penance wrestled
 for thee,
 "From night till weary morn, while drifting
 snows
 "We've round these limbs of mine, a midnight
 shrowd;
 "And have I not prevail'd?" Tho' nurtur'd,
 school'd
 Within the lazaret of heresy,
 The leprous plague thou hast escap'd!—

Rol. Mother! For all of parent, nurse or friend
 These eyes have ever gaz'd on, or these lips
 Saluted with these tenderest names, in thee
 Are centered—if I have stood unshaken,
 And held my faith, to the good Father Ambrose
 Thy thanks and mine are due.

Mag. Mother of heaven!

Reward him for his zeal ! In field and cell—
Pulpit, or at the altar, be he bless'd !
He knew not of thy birth !

Rol. “ How could he know it ? ”

My birth, alas ! What do I know myself ?
A faint remembrance glances o'er my brain
Of tales with which thou didst beguile my childhood—

Something about a knight who fell in battle—
A castle and inheritance which ought
To call me lord—and this, alas ! but feeds
A dream of wild conjectures More than mother !
Leave me in doubt no longer.

Mag. Ask me not now !

It were imprudent !—When the time is apt,
I shall be near thee ! Plans of mighty import
Demand thine efforts. Hast thou left Avenel ?

Rol. Left ! Mother ! I have lived to be dismissed.

Mag. So much the better. Keep thy vengeance festering

Within thy bosom ! It will aid my scheme
And fit thee to perform what must be done.

Rol. “ What must be done ? ” Let it be nothing then

Against the Lady Avenel ! There was a menace
Thy words and look implied : but to her scathe
No aid expect from me !—Have I not known
The joy of her caress :—her smile, protection ;
Sate at her board, partaken of her cup,
Eaten her bread ?—I will not injure her.

Mag. Another mistress claims thee ; and when
heaven

Commissions thee to work its high designs,

And aim the arrow of its wrath, wilt thou
 Reply with impious haste, here will I strike,
 And here, forbear? "Bear witness, holy saint,
 "Before whose violated shrine we stand,
 "As for no private vengeance, nor the view
 "Of temporal honor, I pursue the foes
 "Of heaven and of my country, so no yearnings
 "Of this imperfect nature, shall betray me
 "To spare the guilty."

Rol. "What must I infer
 "From this mysterious language? Am I ever
 "To grope in darkness?"

Mag. (*impetuously.*) "Ha! Dost thou dispute
 my bidding, thoughtless boy?
 "Did I not swathe those limbs of mine, and teach
 "Thy tongue to extricate itself from silence;
 "And wilt thou turn rebellious, now I lack
 "The service of thy ripened faculties?"

Rol. Treat me no longer as a child! Unfold
 The nature of your scheme, and doubt me not,
 My arm, my dagger, and my heart's best blood
 Your confidence shall justify:—but never
 Will I become a puppet—a machine—
 A mere corporeal agent—to be worked,
 But never trusted!—Well, well—I'll do't! I'll
 do't!

That look of grief subdues me.

Mag. 'Tis heaven subdues thee. Thou art
 still my son!
 Thy sovereign's, and thy country's sighs have
 risen
 Above the songs of martyrs, and prevailed.
 But come, that youthful frame requires refresh-
 ment,

For we have other business yet ! (*Takes provisions from her scrip, and lays them on a rough table.*)

Rol. What business ?

Mag. Ask not, but sit and eat. Husband thy strength—

Nourish thy limbs for action—these are times
When Scotland needs her children. (*Roland eats.*)

Rol. “ Why stand aloof ? Why not partake
the food

“ You have provided ? ”

Mag. “ Has this wasted body

“ Endur’d long abstinence, and penance voluntary—

“ And countless vigils spent in prayer ? And now

“ That I have work to do, shall food or rest

“ Seduce me from the task ? ” ’Tis near the time
They must be here ! (*aside.*)—I will retire, my
son !

Within the chapel I must hold a conference.

Wait thou for my return. [*Exit under the archway*

Rol. (*rising from the table.*) Mysterious wo-
man !

“ Round me each moment multiplies the coils

“ Already countless. In such a magic maze

“ Of inward doubt and dark perplexity,

“ Where can I turn ? ” Hold a conference—said
she ?

With whom—or what ? “ By all the Saints !
She twines me

“ To every purpose of her soul, as easily

“ As if my heart and reason were concurrent

“ To work her pleasure. Lest I hawk and hound

“ To be her pupil ? ” Like a hooded hawk

Shall I be carried on a woman's wrist,
 And only shown the quarry at the instant
 When I must make my flight. I'll know her
 object
 Ere I go further.

Enter from the Archway, MAGDALEN GRÆME and CATHARINE SEYTON, veiled: they remain under the arch.

Mag. You know your destination ! The gloaming hour
 Will soon give place to night ! There stands the youth—
 Your fellow labourer in the important work.
 Observe him well ! Become acquainted with him !
 But of your journey, or its course, or purpose,
 Breathe not a whisper ! I must to the chapel,
 Where Sister Bridget waits me !

[Exit Magdalen.]

Cath. (*advancing slowly to the front, removing her veil, and calmly surveying Roland, who is leaning against a broken pillar in sullen thoughtfulness. He moves; Catharine starts and shrieks.*) Cry you mercy !

I took you for a Saint, stepp'd from his niche
 For change of attitude ! Are you a man ?

Rol. (*bowing confusedly*) I wear the form of one, fair gentlewoman !
 And have his breath and motion—but his mind, Free agency, and proud determined will, Heaven has omitted.

Cath. (*laughing heartily*) Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! And what has chased thee thus, thou empty case ?

Thou shell of something human ? Or rather,
 Tell me what comely outside work thou art,
 With which Dame Bridget and Sister Magdalen
 Would have me ratify a league of friendship ?

Rol. How ! fair lady ?

Cath. How ! fair gentleman ?

Why, we are mated in some enterprize,
 'To be explained anon ;—some minutes' space,
 While the two matrons lay their heads together,
 Are given us just to break the ice of form,
 And ask each other questions.

Rol. Faith ! They displayed
 Some taste in the selection, when they sent
 So fair a comrade.

Cath. Come, that's passable !

But how shall we begin to make acquaintance ?

Rol. Suppose we copy from the nursery tales,
 And ask each other's names.

Cath. Right well imagined !

Thou art a shrewd *outside* ! Come, I will listen ;
 Your name, my new acquaintance !

Rol. Roland Graeme !
 And that tall woman is—

Cath. Your mother ?

Rol. She bore me not, and yet she is—my
 mother !—

My only friend !—the all of life I know !

Cath. Who are your parents ?

Rol. They are dead, fair lady !

Cath. Then who *were* they ? .

You *had* parents, I presume ?

Rol. 'Tis probable !

But the soft pressure of a mother's lips
 Mine have not felt. I never knew the joy

A mother's smile imparts. Enough! enough!
 I know but this, that they were nobly born,
 And died with honour. Yet a helpless boy,
 Snatched from the peril of a watery grave,
 To Avenel Castle, some kind hand convey'd me,
 Like a hurt wild duck, to the lady. There,
 Till within these few hours, I have lived
 The lady's page.

Cath. And what accomplishments
 Obtain'd you there? I dearly love to know
 What, in the hour of need, my friends can do.

Rol. I can back horse, and hollow to a hound,
 Wield lance and bow and brand,—and fly a
 hawk!

Cath. And thus you proved the qualities of
 page!

Rol. Some few exploits besides, fair gentle-
 woman!

I hunted cats, shot swans, frightened the maids,
 Chas'd deer, and robb'd the orchard: and now
 and then,
 Like a good Catholic, plagued the castle chap-
 lain.

Cath. Why have you left such service?

Rol. Fair lady!

I could not brook the vulgar insolence
 Of serving men and maids. They taunted me,
 Called me a foundling—child of charity—
 A water drake—wrought up to fury,
 This morn, I drew my dagger on a knave
 Who call'd me churl-born: the brightness of the
 blade

Alarm'd the paltroon, and away he ran
 With all the buttery minions at his heels

Strait to the lady's chamber: she was anger'd—
I too proud to bend, and so we parted !

Cath. Where met you Sister Magdalen ?

Rol. In this cell,

Where accident had brought me. Now, fair
maiden,

Your name and history ?

Cath. I am an orphan ;

My name is Catharine Seyton ; and my story
The counterpart of your's. Dame Bridget is—

Rol. Your grandmother ?

Cath. Worse, ten times worse than that—

My maiden aunt. I too was tried at service !

Rol. And speedily was turn'd adrift, I doubt
not,

For pinching the duenna, or affronting
My lady's waiting woman !

Cath. Nay, not so !

Our mistress had no more occasion for us :
She gave up housekeeping. Few ladies were
there

Who had more gentlewomen under her ;
Or kept a stricter discipline ;—long prayers,
Light food, and late and early labour—

Rol. Out on the old pernicious beldame !

Cath. For heaven's sake, hold your tongue !
The holy Saints

Forgive me ! Saint Catharine of Sienna—
She was the dame I spoke of, and a convent
The mansion ; it contained twelve nuns.

Rol. And you were one ? Where are the rest ?

Cath. With the last winter's snow ; the hur-
ricane,

East, west, north, south, has scatter'd them
abroad,

I know not whither !

Rol. Well, and this enterprise
Which claims your energies and mine. What
is it ?

Cath. Alas !—But here comes Magdalen.

Enter MAGDALEN GRÆME, hastily.

Mag. (*advancing between them*) So ! Have you
well surveyed each other's features ?
Traced every line—conversed with every tone—
Become familiar with each other's step—
And every motion of the eye and hand
Read and rehearsed—so, in whate'er disguise
You may hereafter meet, your penetration
May not be baffled ? Answer, Roland Græme !
Wilt thou this maiden recognise, wherever,
Or whensoever, thou shalt meet her ?

Rol. Fear not ! No time nor circumstance can
wither

The freshness of her portrait in my heart.

Mag. And thou, my daughter, wilt thou bear
in memory

The features of this youth ?

Cath. Truly, my mother,
I have not seen so many men of late,
'That I should soon forget him ; tho' I mark
Not much about him to deserve remembrance.

Mag. Embrace and part then ! Now, my
daughter, hence !

All is prepared : this night, our pious sister
Departs with thee for Edinburgh. Away !

[*Exit. Catharine, interchanging silent
adieu with Roland.*

Rol. And whither do we go ?

Mag. To Kennaquhair ?

A hundred steps will bring us to the Abbey.

Rol. And whither thence ?

Mag. Where heaven commands thy steps,
And I conduct thee ! Owest thou me so little,
That thus with niggard and reluctant will,
Thou yieldest obedience ?

Rol. I forget not, mother,
How much I owe thee ; and the life thou nursed'st,
To thee most freely I devote ! The world
Hath not a desart nor a danger in it
I would not brave to do thy pleasure. " But
" Allow my reason some participation
" In my obedience !

Mag. " Holy Saints and Angels !

" Have I knelt by thy bed, and wearied heaven
" With prayers for thee, and thou refusest now
" To do my bidding ! Hear me, ungrateful boy !
" Resist the lot which calls thee if thou wilt,
" And go thy way—leave me—my hopes are
withered !

" Before yon ravaged altar I will kneel,
" Till in its socket the spent lamp of life
" Shall shroud its latest glimmer !"

Rol. " But, my mother,
" I will not forsake you ; by your side I'll stay ;
" My arm shall buckler you ! I'll shed my blood
" In your defence !"

Mag. One word were worth all these !
Say—I'll obey you !

Rol. With all my heart, I will ;
Doubt not—but yet—

Mag. Pause there—and blessings on thee

That thou hast promised ! The eyes of Angels
—Saints—

Are on this barren, blighted land—on *us*—
On the frail woman and the giddy youth,
Who thus, amidst the ruins, not by time,
But impious fury made, devote their lives
To Heaven and Scotland's sovereign.

(*She leads Roland to the Cross, and makes him kneel with her.*)

“Blessed host !

“ Martyrs and Saints, who listen to our vow,
“ Witness its execution ! If we desert
“ The sacred cause, expunge our recreant names
“ From the bright record of the souls you love ;
“ Make all our prayers unfruitful ; scathe and
 scorn
“ Scatter in all our paths, and when the death-damp
“ Stands in big drops upon our dying foreheads,
“ Leave us to sink in merited despair !”

[*They rise and come forward.*

Now then to Kennaquhair !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE—*Interior of the Monastery of St. Mary's. The Hall lighted up; the Altar, and every preparation for the Installation. A pair of folding doors at the back of the scene.*

Enter FATHER AMBROSE.

Father A. “ All things are ready for the installation !

“ And soon the mitre which Eustatius wore

" Shall circle this less worthy forehead. Even
 now
 " The trembling brothers wait, with sinking
 hearts,
 " Their new elected Abbot ! Not ambition—
 " Sainted Eustatius !—not ambition prompts me
 " To fill thy desolated seat ! Alas !
 " No earthly wealth—no temporal influence
 " Now dignifies the sacred office !—No !
 " Nor humble vassals throng to offer tribute.
 " The power and splendor of the pastoral name
 " Have pass'd away, and left its poor possessors
 " A heritage of poverty and peril.
 " But I must on to the consistory.
 " I hear the echoes as the impatient brethren
 " Pace, too and fro, the cloister'd avenues.

[Exit Ambrose.]

Enter VENIAM, followed by MAGDALEN GRÆME and ROLAND.

Ven. Intrate ! Sister ! Welcome too, my son !
 In good time have you come—the wicks are
 lighted—

The altar cleansed—the ruins swept aside—
 And from the chapter-house already moves
 The short procession ! No throwing wide the
 gates

To admit the humble laity—no chime
 Of merry bells—

Mag. Regard not that, my brother !
 In the first ages of our holy church
 In tears—in tempests were her abbots chosen :—
 Not in the Vatican, but the deep vaults

And subterraneous dungeons of the heathen ;—
 Not greeted with the shouts of multitudes,
 The roar of cannon, artificial fire,
 But by the Lictors' and the Prætors' summons
 Which call'd the fathers forth to martyrdom.
 From such adversity she rose ; and now
 By such shall she be purified !

Ven. Come then !
 I see the lights that move this way.

(*Veniam opens the folding doors : the organ strikes up in solemn swell, accompanied by the voices of the monks in deep chorus.*)

Enter FATHER AMBROSE, and a train of monks, bearing torches, and chaunting the mass, as they arrange themselves on each side of the altar. As the chorus continues, noises are heard without ; yells, and horns, and bells, becoming louder and louder. The monks cease their chant, and huddle round the ABBOTT, who motions them to be calm. MAGDALEN and ROLAND advance from the place where they had stood unseen. Magdalen approaches the altar, and appears about to speak. Roland looks towards the door, and half unsheathes his dagger.

Father A. Speak not, my sister ! and my son,
 forbear
 To touch thy earthly weapon ! “ Saint Mary’s
 “ head
 “ Himself shall greet the clamorous train of vas-
 “ sals,
 “ Who come to celebrate his installation !”
 If blood this day must desecrate our shrine,

Thou mayest not shed it. (*Loud knocking, and Father Ambrose advances towards the gate.*) Whosoe'er you are,

Whose boistereus interruption breaks our worship,

Peace—and reply—whence came you?

Voice without. Open the doors!

Open, sir monk, or down they go!

Several voices. Hurrah!

Down with the doors! down with the lurdane
monks!

Father A. By what authority demand you entrance?

Voice without. Our own, old piety!

Several voices. Aye, our own.

Father A. Begone, my erring children. I alone
In this house hold authority.

Voices without. Hurrah!

Down with the doors! (*loud hammering at the doors.*)

Father A. Cease! cease, my children! (*motions to Veniam, who retires.*)

The porter shall unlock the doors! Meantime
Consider if your state of mind be fit
To cross the holy threshold.

Voice without. Peace with your papistry! We
are in the mood of the monks when they are
merriest, and that is when they sup beef brewis
for lanten-kail. Let your porter be speedy, or
we will heave away.

Voices. Huzza! huzza!

Re-enter VENIAM, with the keys. FATHER AMBROSE motions ROLAND and MAGDALEN to re-

tire behind a pillar, and VENIAM to open the door. Father A. advances boldly to front the intruders. Veniam goes off, unlocks the door, and hastily runs back behind Father Ambrose. After a brief pause, enter slowly a clown, followed by several others.

1st clown, (turning to his companions.) Keep back, my comrades. Let me speak to the holy father.

Clowns. Aye, aye, let him speak.

Father A. What is your pleasure ?

1st clown. Beef, ale, and brandywine ; or, if it like you better, venison and choicer liquor. Who's your refectioner ?

Clowns. Aye, where's the refectioner ?

Father A. Alas ! my children, we have little use

*For serving men and caterers. Our refectory
Contains but pilgrim's fare !*

Clowns. He lies ! Down with him !

*Mag. (rushing forward) Arouse thee, father,
And with Saint Peter's goodly sword thou bear-
est,*

Strike, and avenge Saint Peter's patrimony !

*" Bind them in chains, which, by the church im-
" posed,*

" Eternity shall rivet."

Father A. Peace, my sister !

*Clowns. A witch ! a witch ! the ducking stool !
the mill-dam !*

1st clown. (advances to seize Magdalen, when Roland, rushing forwards, seizes him by the throat, raises his dagger, and assumes an attitude to strike.

Rol. Breathe but another sound, and by this weapon ! *(shout)*

Father A. (*stepping between them*) Rash youth, forbear ! (*Roland loses his hold*)

Heaven is its own avenger ! children ! friends ! Under our predecessors you have lived ; The worldly goods you have by them were given, And better gifts, the mercy of the church, Fasting, and prayer, and vigil, were bestowed.

(the crowd give back with signs of shame)
1st clown. So I have heard the old wives say.

Father A. And is it grateful, seemly, honest, friends,

To come with noisy violence and threats Against a few old men, who fill the places Once held by those who gave you all ? We only pray to live and die in peace.

1st clown. The queen's down, and Murray's up, and the order is to burn the monasteries, and root out the monks. So down with them, comrades.

Clowns. Aye ! aye ! down with them ! *(they advance)*

Enter suddenly Sir HALBERT GLENDINNING, ADAM WOODCOCK, and attendants armed. He interposes between the monks and the crowd ; the latter fall back.

Sir Halb. Out, base-born cowards ! Are you christian men, Subjects, and vassals, and presume you thus To deal in outrage ?

1st clown. We heard, Sir Halbert, from some of you train, that you had brought orders from court to put down the monastery.

Sir Halb. Villain, and if I had ! lacked I the power,

What you, the very scum of vassalage,
Usurp their execution ? Get you home,
Or, by my trusty lance, to-morrow's dawn
Shall never beam on some of you. (*crowd sneak away.*)

(To Father Ambrose.) Edward !

I joy that I have done you this slight service ;
Scarce two hours since I came from Holyrood ;
By accident, from one of these loud brawlers,
Woodcock picked up the news of their intent,
And gave me instant notice. (sees Roland) Roland Græme !

Met in good time ! The tale of thy dismissal
Has reached my ear ; my lady was too hasty,
Upon such slight offence, to banish thee :
But what has brought you hither ?

Father A. Brother, he came
With sister Magdalen, his sole relation.

Sir Halb. I have commission to send to Holyrood,

For special purposes, a trusty page,
Thou, in thy exercises and thy breeding,
Hast shown the sparkles of a gentle spirit,
Therefore I will dispatch thee to the court.
What ? Dost thou hesitate ?

Rol. I feel, Sir Knight,
Such gratitude as well becomes me. But
My kind nurse, my only friend, my mother,
Who tended me in infant helplessness,
I may not leave her now ; the frost of time
Hath chilled her veins, and bleached her aged head.

(*turning to Magdalen*. The limbs and faculties
thou taughtest their use,
Thou needest now to toil for thee ! protect thee !
No—no—I will not leave thee !

Sir Halb. Who art thou ?

Mag. Who or what I am concerns thee little !
Roland accepts thy offer ! Nay, my son,
Tho' old, these bones have marrow in them yet,
And heaven subdues with weakest instruments.
Farewell, Sir Knight, and peace be with you !

(*retires with Roland.*)

Sir Halb. (*beckoning his attendants to retire*) Edward !

It grieves me much that I must hence with speed !
The promptest measures only can avert
The consequence of this day's rash procedure.
Roland must instantly to Edinburgh ;
My trusty falconer shall attend him.

Father A. "Nay, but you'll eat with me : a
"pilgrim's meal

"I'll set before you, and with cheerful heart
"We'll share the scant provisions."

Sir Halb. "It may not be."
Even while I linger here, some slanderous
tongue

May arraign, to Murray's ear, the daring man,
Who, in the face of edicts, has presumed
To take the abbot's office.

Father A. Heed not that !
I would not to the church's enemy,
Even though my brother, owe my temporal
safety.
But I would shed my heart's best blood to hear
The church had won thee to her fold.

Sir Hal. Farewell !
 Such vain discussion only wastes the time.
 Follow me, Roland !

[*Exeunt Sir Halbert, Father Ambrose, and Adam Woodcock, and train. Sir Halbert winding his bugle as he makes his exit. Magdalen and Roland advance.*

Mag. Farewell, my son ! Yet, ere we part,
 receive

This sacred packet. Keep it in thy bosom !
 And when despair and darkness thicken round
 thee,

And all of hope and love thy soul hath cherish'd
 Seem fleeting from thee, place it in her hand
 Whom thou hast seen to-day. So now, farewell !
 Be faithful, and the Saints protect thee !

Rol. My more than mother, may the blessed
 Virgin

Bless and defend thee !—(*They embrace.*)

[*Exit. Roland.*

Magdalen falls on her knees before the altar.
The organ's swell is heard calling to Vespers.
Re-enter Father Ambrose and Monks from all
sides, who range round the altar, and fill the
stage while the drop scene slowly falls.

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT II.

SCENE—*A public room in the hostelry of St. Michael's, Edinburgh—several tables—persons seated, smoaking, drinking, &c.—At one table, considerably advanced before the rest, ROLAND and ADAM WOODCOCK.*

Adam. Oh Heaven, have mercy upon us, and send us speedy departure from this Edinburgh! “We had not been half an hour within the gates, but you must unsheathe bilbo, and take part in the first broil we saw.” And what had you to do with the Seytons, or the Leslies, that you had never known the names of in your life before?

Rol. I have my own reasons for taking part with the Seytons.

Adam. I'll wager a groat, Master Roland, that it is nothing but your unhallowed passion for that clashing of cold iron, which has as much charm for you as the clatter of a brass pan hath for a hive of bees. But if you are to draw sword with every man who draws sword—

Rol. Well, well, Adam, I'll promise you to be more wary.

Adam. And then you are peering under every woman's muffler and screen, as if you expected to find an old acquaintance.

Rol. Tush, man, nonsense! I only wish to

see what eyes these gentle hawks have got under their hoods.

Enter WING-THE-WIND, (hastily.)

Win. Well found, my old friend Adam. You must despatch your business quick ; and, within this hour, to horse for Kennaquhair and Avenel. For you, good sir, the Regent shapes another course. (*to Rol.*)

Adam. It will fash me sorely to part from Master Roland ; and I fear he will scarcely be able to go through the world without my protecting prudence, to keep his tongue within bounds and his iron in the sheath.

Rol. Alas ! good Adam ! If Sir Halbert told me right, I shall have little use for steel in my new character ; and no occupation for my tongue, save to war with women's wit, or chant psalmody to frighten away the devil on winter nights.

Adam. So much the better, Master Roland. But come, my old boy, Michael, for "Auld Lang Syne," as you Scots say, let us have a pottle together.

Win. Not now, Adam ; I have other business ; but anon, come to the buttery, at Holyrood ; and we'll empty a pitcher or two at parting. (*Exit.*)

Adam. Tapster ! tapster ! Fetch a stoup of brandy-wine, knave ! We will have a can together once more, Master Roland, and let care come to-morrow.

Voice, (without.) I seek a youth, with a sprig of holly in his cap, black hair and black eyes, green jacket, and the air of a coxcomb. I have

sought him through every close and alley in the Canongate, the fiend gore him !

Rol. (starting, and rushing towards the door.) Catharine Seyton, as I live. (aside.)

Enter CATHARINE SEYTON, disguised as a page.

Cath. (advancing towards Roland, who slowly retreats.) You, Sir Holly Top, I would speak with you. (Roland still retreats.) Do they understand a Scotch tongue in your Country. I said I would speak with you.

Adam. (advancing between them.) What's your business with my comrade, my young chick of the game ?

Cath. Nothing to you, my old feeder of falcons—for I guess by your bag and gauntlet, that you are squire of the body to a sort of kites. (To Roland.) Step this way, out of that old eaves-dropper's hearing.

Rol. I think, we two are not wholly strangers to each other.

Cath. We must have met in our dreams, then ; and my days are too busy to remember what I think of at nights.

Rol. Or, apparently, to remember the faces you have seen from one day to another.

Cath. Prithee, good Holly Top, put those eyes of thine under good government, and unmuffle thine ears. Let me do mine errand, and be rid of you.

Rol. About it speedily, then, my fair incog. for I see other eyes than mine are upon you.

Cath. (taking a handsome sword from under her mantle.) This weapon I bring you from a friend. Pledge yourself, hand and glove, not

to unsheathe it but at the command, and in the presence, of your rightful sovereign.

Rol. By whom is it sent? Or when will the opportunity be given? Or how—

Cath. Ask no questions; my commission extends not to answering them.

Rol. If I am offended, may I not draw in my own defence?

Cath. Not this weapon! For what do you wear your own?

Adam. (*who has approached gradually.*) For no good; and that I can witness as well as any one.

Cath. Stand back, fellow, that curious face of thine will gain thee a buffet some day.

Adam. A buffet, Master Malapert, best keep down fist; or buffet will beget buffet.

Rol. Peace, Adam, go finish your brandy-wine. (*To Catharine.*) I accept of this weapon under the condition you impose; but if we are to work together in a mighty enterprize, some openness and confidence on your part will be necessary. You understand me! Remember Sister Magdalen and Dame Bridget!

Cath. Bridget and Magdalen! Hark ye, Master Holly Top, your wits are gone on wool-gathering; comfort yourself with a caudle; thatch your brain-sick noddle with a woollen night-cap, and Heaven bless you—Don't you see all eyes are upon us. (*aside.*) going.

Adam. Will you drink a cup, young man, now you have done your errand, and listen to a good song? (*sings.*)

“The Pope, that pagan, full of pride,”—

Cath. He who speaks irreverently of the Holy Father, in my hearing, is the cub of a heretic wolf, and I'll switch him as I would a cur! (*The company rise, and take their hats, whispering to each other, and go off, one by one, as if fearing a fray.*)

Adam. I will break thy young pate, if thou darest to lift finger to me. (*sings.*)

“The Pope, that pagan, full of pride,
“Hath blinded”—

Cath. (*striking him across the eyes with her switch.*) Out on thee, heretic! (*Adam starts up, rubbing his eyes, to grapple with CATHARINE.*)

Rol. (*stepping between.*) To Catharine. Get you gone, “quickly, there are earnest reasons “why you should.”

Cath. “There, at least, you are right—so, “farewell.” (*Exit.*)

Rol. Sit down, Adam, you know not with whom you deal.—She shall not escape me thus. By all the saints, I'll follow her steps. (*aside.*) Sit down, good Adam, and renew your can. (*Seats ADAM, who continues to rub his eyes, while ROLAND runs off.*)

Adam. By this light, which I cannot see, thou hast been a false friend to me, Master Roland; for thou would'st neither tweak the monkey's nose, nor let me do it myself. What sayest thou to that charge?—What! not a word? “If you saw your father in a scrape, “I'll warrant, you would laugh at him, instead

"of lending him a hand." (*Looking up.*) Why, he is gone! What incarnate devil has got hold of you now. Tapster, my hat—where did he go? God-a-mercy, I'll be close at his heels.

(*Exit, running.*

SCENE.—THE STREET.

CATHARINE SEYTON, *in her disguise*, passes across the back of the stage. Just as she goes off—enter ROLAND GRAËME, who makes a full stop, gazing after her.

Rol. Her step—her figure—and that matchless grace!

There's nothing masculine in't—Oh! 'tis herself!

My whispering heart is but a treacherous prompter

If it be otherwise! "Yet her eye shrunk not
"From my inquiring glances—nor her voice
"Betrayed confusion—nor on that velvet cheek,
"Where never yet the down of manhood grew,
"Faltered the vernal rose! Well—well—no
matter!"

Ay, trip along, fair sylph! But, by the mass!

You'll show young Atalanta's nimble heels

An' I o'er take you not. (Exit.)

Enter ADAM WOODCOCK, out of breath.

Adam. Saint Mary, Saint Magdalen, Saint Benedict, Saint Barnabas, Saint Satan, and Saint Belzebub!—for this is enough to make one swear saint and devil. What can have come over the

youth with a murrain ! He will have his throat cut, as sure as I was born at the foot of Roseberry Topping ! An' I could but see the top of a holly-sprig now, it were worth a gold tassel. Ah ! who goes yonder ? the purple page, as I'm a true falconer, and Master Roland after him ! Why, he wont surely follow him into that great house ! He does—now, before I can get to the door, he will have got his stomach full of that cold iron he loves so dearly. I'll never leave him in jeopardy, however—so here goes.

(Exit.)

SCENE—*The interior of Lord SEYTON's house.*
Enter CATHARINE, hastily, throwing herself into a chair.

Cath. What can I do ? That inconsiderate youth !

I saw him close behind me as I entered.
He little recks the dangers which beset
That holly sprig of his.

Enter ROLAND.

Fly for your life !

How could you enter here ! where that vile leaf,

Which forms your top-knot, will make enemies
Of every one who sees you ! (noise without.)

Get you gone !

A moment more—

Rol. And but a single moment !

For what am I reserved ? Resolve this doubt
With but a word, or, by my hopes !—

Cath. Fly, quickly !
 Horses are now in waiting to escort me
 To the Queen's prison at Lochleven ! (noise
 increases.) Alas !
 You have already staid too long. Farewell !
 Ask for Lord Seyton ! We shall meet again !

(Exit.

(Enter Servants with swords drawn.

1st Serv. A spy ! a spy !

2d Serv. Look at the holly leaf. One of
 Avenel's retainers !

3d Serv. Down with him. (advancing.)

Rol. Nay : I would speak with Lord Seyton !

1st. Serv. Secure the door !

(They advance upon him.)

(Enter from behind MAGDALEN GRÆME, who
 suddenly interposes between them.)

Mag. Vassals ! forbear ! The wretch whose
 traitorous steel

Scars but the skin of that heaven-buckler'd
 youth—

Wither his arm, till from the sapless bone
 The blasted flesh fall piecemeal !

(Servants retire.)

(To Roland.) Thou rash youth !

Whence this unlook'd-for meeting ?

(Enter Lord SEYTON.)

Lord Sey. What means this tumult ? Sure my
 roof's protection

Should be the stranger's surety—friend or foe—
 For hospitable greeting, or fair contest !

Ha ! do my eyes deceive me ? The same youth
 Who yesternight rush'd boldly to my side,

When my own knaves grew fearful, and beat
back

The foe that pressed upon me. Give him wel-
come !

Your name, young man ?

Rol. Roland Græme, so please you :
And in Lord Seyton's presence if I stand,
I joy to find your grace's hurt was trifling ;
And so I take my leave.

Lord Sey. (*to Magdalen.*) Is this the youth
For whose good faith and active offices
Ambrose hath proffered doubtless guarantee ?
And thou——

Mag. The hostage of this withered form ;
On which frail surety hast thou not already
Committed to his care——

Lord Sey. Enough—enough. (*taking a gold
chain from his bonnet and putting
it round Roland's neck.*)

Wear this, my trusty friend—thy gallant bearing
Approves thee worthy of a Seyton's friendship.

Adam. (*without.*) I saw him enter this house—
as I have skill in falconry, I did ; and if he is
not forthcoming, with his own head on his
shoulders, and without the scratch of a bilbo
upon his skin, the Regent shall, for every hurt
in his body, flay a score of you.

Lord Sey. What noisy fellow have we here ? .

Rol. My good lord !

It is the trusty falconer of Glendinning,
Who hath the charge of me to Edinburgh ;
I have but left him while I made the inquiry
Which brought me hither.

(Enter ADAM WOODCOCK.)

Adam. That firebrand spirit of yours, Mister Roland, will surely be the death of both of us yet, before we separate. Cry you mercy, lords and ladies.—As I am a Christian! the old witch Madge from Avenel. (*Aside.*)

Rol. Silence, good Adam; get thee to the door,

And there await me.

Adam. And will you come with your neck out of a halter? I don't see that switch-swinging, purple-cloaked knave who made so free—

Rol. Peace, I say—begone—I'll follow instantly. (*leads him off to the door.*)

And now, my lord, once more I take my leave—
Links of more lasting power than these of gold—

Mag. Impetuous boy, no more! Start not, my lord!

A young enthusiast in his sovereign's cause,
He lack'd no chain to bind him to her fortunes,
Save that which loyal love and true devotion
Hath woven round his heart!—

Lord Sey. Farewell—success attend thee.

(*Exit.*)

Mag. (*in an undertone.*) Another word,
And thou hadst blasted all my budding hopes!
Think not of love, nor soul-subduing pleasure,
While Scotland claims the vigour of thine arm,
And Scotland's Queen an undivided heart—
Or basely perish in the sordid flame
Thy rebel passions have engendered. Farewell!

(*Exeunt severally.*)

SCENE—A chamber. Queen MARY discovered reclining on a sofa. Lady FLEMING seated at her feet; and CATHARINE SEYTON advanced towards the front, and sitting at her harp.

SONG.

Tune—“*Ye banks and braes o’ bonny Doun.*”

1.

Ah! what is Summer’s gaudy gear,
Or beamy morn, to captive e’e?—
Or music to the prison’d ear?—
Save that wild cadence—Liberty!
The orient sun, with golden light,
May stud the palace of the free,
But noon-day gleams are dull as night
To her who weeps for liberty.

2.

Young Spring bath not a flower to charm,
Nor tint of grace, nor breath of glee,
Nor smile to cheer, nor ray to warm
The heart bereft of liberty.
For freedom is the sun—the dew—
Spring’s life, and Summer’s fragrant sigh;
We riot in its radiant hue,
And when its glory sets—we die!

Mary. (advancing.) So from his wiry prison
the poor bird

Warbles his lament to departed freedom!
And thou, my youthful maiden, little knowest
What ’tis to drag on life from day to day,
Breathing and taking back the breath of bondage!—

To pine and wither ’midst unwholesome walls,
Shut out from all the gay and busy world,

And sight or sound of pleasure ;—“ to receive,
 “ ’Stead of the greetings of unpurchased love,
 “ Which call the affections forth, as summer suns
 “ Extract rich beauties from the sordid earth,
 “ A courtesy constrained and cold, that blights
 “ The heart’s young blossoms, and with icy touch
 “ Congeals the fount of feeling !”

Cath. My gracious Queen !

Mary. I know what thou would’st say, my
 girl ; there’s love,

And truth, and fix’d devotion in thy look.

Thou deem’st the presence of thy Queen can
 make

A palace of a prison. But, alas !

When from the surface of that downy cheek

The bleaching hand of stern captivity

Shall pluck the rose—and the sad, secret tears

Imparted to thy pillow, shall have worn

Deep furrows where the sickly lillies shed

A morbid paleness—the pulses of that heart

Will beat to graver measure, and experience,

Outstripping sadly the fast foot of time,

Lead on such cares, as now thou reck’st not of.

Cath. And care, my royal mistress, shall be
 sweet

As ever joy has been, can I but turn

The envenom’d arrows from my queen.

Mary. Good girl !

If, by the ebb of this ill-fortuned tide,

Which for the present whelms me, Scotland’s
 queen

Should reassume her throne, thy ardent love

And services shall be remembered.

(*Bugle sounds.*) Ha !

What may this mean? (*a knock at the door.*)
some unexpected evil!

Give entrance to it, Fleming!

Enter DOUGLAS, with great dejection of look and manner.

Well, Douglas,
Those sorrowing looks of thine are gloomy
heralds,

Whose silent eloquence outruns thy tongue!

What means that shrill alarm?

Doug. So please your majesty—commissioners

From Holyrood were presently expected,
And this loud summons tells us of their arrival.

Mary. Commissioners! From Holyrood!

George Douglas!

Whence comes it that the Queen was not informed

Her subjects sought her presence?

Doug. Madam!

Scarce half an hour ago, the lady mother
Gave me such intimation, which the speed
Of their arrival hath overtaken me,
Even in the act of bearing to my Queen.
A page, just set ashore, attends without,
To do your royal pleasure.

Mary. Admit him!

But see! our lady hostess, who well wots
How much we love her presence, hath out-
stripp'd

Our slow permission.

*Enter LADY LOCHLEVEN, followed by ROLAND
GRÆME.*

We appreciate duly

The favor of this unrequested visit—
This unannounc'd intrusion on the hour
We used to set apart for our devotion.

Lady L. I grieve my presence should offend
your grace.

I bring this young addition to your train ;
And tho' the day be early, yet I deem'd
The sight of such a spruce and smooth-faced
minion

Might well extenuate my fault.

Mary. Doubtless,

Mary of Scotland must admire the love
Which gives the daughter of so many kings,
Herself a Queen anointed, suite so numerous,
As these two waiting women and a page !
Add but an usher and two serving men,
And we shall have attendance which may rival
The train of any country dame in Fife :
The kindness of my nobles—or my sovereigns—
So I must call them—bends me to the earth !

Lady L. Perhaps at some cost of policy,
your grace,

This new indulgence has been granted you.

Mary. Or rather, at some cost to our poor
hostess.

My selfish rapture made me overlook
The trouble and the charges which will fall
On our good lady and her house, forsooth,
From this officious swelling of our train !
Clothe not that gentle brow with frowns, fair
dame ;

Pertaining to the crown are goodly manors,
From which your dutious son and my kind bro-
ther

Will give large bounty, e'er thro' lack of means
The term of Mary's visit to your castle
Should find an hour's subtraction.

Lady L. The Douglasses
Have ever known their duties to the state,
Aye, and discharged them duly, even when dan-
ger

And irksomeness attended the performance,
Regardless of reward.

Mary. Nay, dear Lochleven,
Be not too scrupulous : accept a manor !
What should support the sovereign and her
court,
But her crown lands ? and such a duteous son
As Murray's Earl, will not disgrace his mother
By insufficient bounty ! But I trifle !
Leave us, good hostess : we require some mo-
ments
To fit us for this interview.

(*Exeunt LADY LOCHLEVEN and DOUGLAS.*)

(*To Roland.*) Young man !
Thou, too, hast left some happy hearth, made
cheerful
By kindling smiles, and looks that spoke content,
To share a prison's gloom, and waste thy youth
Where joy inhabits not.

Rol. So please your highness !
All I have known of pleasure, is the name.
My memory chronicles no hours of joy
On which to found regrets ; and for the future,
If these weak sinews and this body's service
Can but acquit the love I owe my Queen,
This day begins my calendar of life.

Mary. Well said, my page : I like the gentle spirit

That speaks throughout thy bearing and thy words.

Thou art my chamberlain—my sole attendant :
Wilt thou obey my orders ?

Rol. To death, my Queen !

Mary. Guard then our chamber door : some slight adjustment

Our dress requires : We would not rebel rudeness

Should prematurely break upon our presence.

Rol. Madam, no foot shall pass the threshold's limit,

Save o'er this body.

Mary. Attend me, Fleming !

Catharine, bring thou thy harp : its soothing tones

May tranquillize my spirit.

(*Exunt MARY and FLEMING.*)

Rol. (*As he carries the harp towards the chamber.*)

Well met, fair maid ! Now, by my hope of bliss,
We have soon reached the height of our ferment,

And may coo amorous phrases at each other,
Like two caged turtle doves !

Cath. Yes, worthy sir !

In separate cages, tho'. But prithee, speed !
Our royal mistress waits my coming.

Rol. Only a word or too !

Cath. Another time !

We shall have space enough to use our tongues

Before we leave this place. Hark ! Fleming
calls !

Give me the harp.

(*Exit CATHARINE.*)

Rol. My beauteous Queen and mistress !
Already in this bosom, every spark
Of generous manhood kindles for thy service.
But hold awhile : this fiery zeal of mine
Ill suits the character of my commission.
To spy upon her actions—note her words—
And bid mine eyes make comment on her looks—
And these with treacherous diligence report
To those who seek hēr life. Such is the service
Expected at my hands : to them or her
I must prove false : disloyal to my Queen ;
Or to base traitors, traitor ; Whate'er this blood,
Or wheresoever fountain'd, I'll not stain it
By meanly catering for the gorge of treason.
Treason !—What is it ! Is it treason to oppose
A sovereignty which rules by desolation ?
Mary has powerful foes : whether her guilt,
Or her misfortunes have created them,
I may not judge ; yet, ère I list myself—(*CATHA-*

RINE heard without, singing, accompanied. ROLAND listens.)

“ My maids come to my dressing bower,
“ And deck my nut-brown hair,
“ Where'er ye laid a plait before,
“ Look ye lay ten times mair.”

My charming mavis ! thou art lost to me
If I forsake the Queen, and one sweet smile—
One whisper of the heart from thee, repays
Ten thousand dangers. Enough, I am resolved !

(*A loud knocking at the door.*)

Lord Lind. (*without.*) Undo the door within !

Rol. At whose command ?
Who claims admittance to the Queen of Scotland ?

Lord Lind. Fool ! on your peril, open ; or, by Heaven !

Lindesay will force admission.

Sir R. Mel. (*Without.*) Nay, be patient ! Let the Queen know her faithful counsellor, Sir Robert Melville, asks an interview.

Rol. Your Message shall be sped.—(*ROLAND taps at the door of the Queen's apartment, speaks within, and returning, gives admission to the commissioners.*)

Enter *Lord LINDESAY, Sir ROBERT MELVILLE, Lord RUTHVEN, and DOUGLAS.*

Rol. (*To Melville.*) Witness Sir Robert Melville, had the Queen

Denied her acquiescence, not a man
Had entered here, save o'er my bleeding corse.

Lord Lind. Silence, loud boy ! Where is your trifling mistress ?

Rol. The Queen is here.

Enter *Queen MARY, Lady FLEMING, and CATHARINE SEYTON.*

Mary. We fear we have detained you, noble
sirs !

You wear a formidable sword, Lord Lindesay ;
A strange court ornament ! Feared you to meet
Some giant enemy within these walls ?

Lord Lind. No Madam, no ! But this good
blade of mine

Hath courtier's privilege ; for, before this day,
It hath disturbed the presence of a Stuart.

Mary. How so, my lord ?

Lord Lind. Your grace shall shortly hear.
Douglas, the Earl of Angus wore this sword,
When from your grandsire's presence, the
third James,

He dragged that servile herd of sycophants,
Whose corses afterwards, on Lawler Bridge,
From their tall gibbets pluck'd the carrion
crows.

With this same weapon, near the brook of Fala,
He sheared the courtier's thigh, whose slanderous
tongue

To James the fourth traduced him, lopping the
limb,

As easily as the early half-grown twig
Is severed from the sapling !

Mary. 'Tis a tale
Fit for a lady's ear ! But pray go on.
How pass'd a blade of such illustrious daring
To Lindesay, from the House of Douglas ? Me-thinks

They deem'd too lightly of it, to let pass
So choice a relic !

Sir R. Mel. (*hastily.*) Nay, Madam, ask it not !
And you, my lord, for shame, reply not to it.

Lord Lind. 'Tis time the truth should reach
her. Know then, Madam,
When Bothwell's Earl, that foul and murderous
traitor,

To personal combat challeng'd any noble
Who dared accuse him, gifted with this sword
By noble Morton, I defied the wretch,
And Heaven so help me, had he kept his word,
This trusty steel so well had carved his body,

That the carnivorous birds and hungry hounds
Had found the morsels suited to their throats.

Mary. Had Mary Stuart worn her father's
sword,

The boldest of the rebels on that day
Should not have lack'd a foe. But come, my
Fleming,

Unless Lord Lindesay find some weightier
matter

To treat us with, than these great feats of Bell-
the-Cat,

And of the deeds himself proposed to do,
Had time and tide so will'd, we will retire,
And you shall read to me the doughty doings
Of some enchanted knight, at whose bright
sword

Armies of monsters melted into air,
Or hardened into statues.

Lord Lind. Tarry, Madam !

I did not seek this interview to tempt
The sharpness of your wit. The secret coun-
cil

Has charged us with a more important errand.

Mary. Then with your favour, Lords, I'll
sit ! Proceed !

Sue you for pardon ? Do you bring petition,
That now I will resume my rightful throne,
And let the cherub mercy check the arm
Of threatening justice ?

Lord Ruth. Madam, it pains me

To speak harsh truths :—we come to offer par-
don—

Not implore it. Affix your signature
To these considered instruments, by which,

In favour of your son, you make demission
Of crown and government. Thus you will
soothe

The troubled aspect of the times, and spare
Yourself the consequence of rash rejection.

Mary. And is this *all* my loving subjects ask ?
Are they content that I resign a crown,
By birthright mine, to an unconscious infant,—
A twelvemonth's tenant of this constant world,—
Fling down my sceptre, and take up a distaff ?
No, this is far too little ! Good, my lord !
What says the other scroll ?

Lord Ruth. By this your grace
Appoints your trusty kinsman, first in blood,
And the most honoured and honourable
Of all your subjects, James the Earl of Murray,
The kingdom's regent, till the infant King
Arrive at age discreet.

Mary. (*clapping her hands, and then hiding her face.*) Alas ! Alas !
Out of my brother's quiver comes the arrow—
And from my brother's bow ! Was it for this
I look'd for his return ?

Lord Ruth. I pray your answer.
Mary. Traitor. But for my mercy, thy base
head

Had long since stood upon the City gates !

Lord Ruth. Let not my presence goad you to
your ruin !

The death of Rizzio cost our house its head,
My father, worthier than a thousand slaves
Like that false minion, perished in his exile.

(MARY weeps.)

Sir R. Mel. This is too harsh, my lords !

Mary. Silence, Sir Robert.

I grieve that traitors should behold me weep.
(wiping her eyes.)

But tell me, haughty Lords, what earthly warrant

Can pluck the crown from the anointed brow.

Lord Lind. Your own misgovernment hath made the land

A scene of bloody brawl and endless contest.

Brother by brother falls, and son by sire :

Rebellion, slaughter, exile and oppression,

Have marked your rule ! Your abdication, madam,

Is now a debt you owe your suffering country.

Mary. Lindesay, you spake not with such scurril taunt

On yon fair summer eve, when at the butts,

In gay Saint Andrew's garden, we essayed

Our skill in archery together ; then

Thou wert my friend, and vowedst to be my soldier.

Lord Lind. (affected.) Ay, then were all men pleased to play the fool,

So it might win your smile ; but gayer men,

And better courtiers jostled me aside,

And made my awkwardness their ridicule.

Mary. I grieve, my lord, if by my gay demeanour

I gave offence ; through idle gaiety

I never shall offend again.

Lord Ruth. Madam,

Our time is wasting. Pray you, make decision !

Mary. What, on the instant ? Not a moment given

On such momentous issue to determine ?
What do you offer in exchange for crown,
Wealth, subjects, state and power ?

Lord Ruth. We give you pardon,
And time and means in holy solitude,
To make your peace with Heaven.

Mary. If I refuse—

Lord Ruth. For murder and adultery—

Sir R. Mel. Forbear, my lord !

You, and my Lord of Lindesay, for some seconds,
Retire, while I with gentler language strive,
To win her grace's ear.

Lord Lind. So let it be ;
For half an hour within the hall we'll wait.

(*Exeunt LINDESAY and RUTHVEN.*)
(*FLEMING, CATHARINE, and SIR ROBERT, kneel to MARY to sooth her.*)

Mary. Kneel not to me, Sir Robert ! Mock
me not
With vain, unmeaning homage ! Why stay you
here,
With the deposed—condemned ?

Sir R. Mel. So help me Heaven,
My heart is true as when your highness filled
The throne of Scotland. I am old, indeed,
And cannot, like the Seytons, wield a sword,
To do you service !—

Mary. Oh ! were a Seyton here,
Whose wisdom, truth, and valour, might assist
me !
Were there but one, whose arm at Mary's call,
Would bare his trusty sword !—

Rol. Madam, there is ! (Drawing his sword,
from which falls a scroll.)

Cath. (picking up the scroll.) Even at your
call, my liege, a Seyton's wisdom
Attends with proffered service.

Mary. (reads.) 'Tis so, indeed !
This is Lord Seyton's writing, and he counsels
That I submit myself, and sign the deeds,
Which being thus by forceful means obtained,
Will lose their obligation, when affairs
May justify the exposition !—My page,
How came you by this parchment ?

Rol. So please your grace !
There's one beside you, who, methinks, could
better

Exound the riddle to your highness.

Mary. Catharine !
Knows't thou of this ?

Cath. Why some such sword as that,
An aged devotee, one Sister Magdalen,
Entrusted to my care, to give the youth,
Lest, being committed to inferior hands,
It might not reach its destiny. My liege,
Thus far I know, but of the writing nothing,
Save that it is my father's.

Sir R. Mel. My dear mistress !
He has advised you well Yield to the tide.
Such rapid strides has treason made already,
We well may fear the worst.

Mary. You terrify me—
Surely no more assassinations ! Oh no !
They would not dare—

Sir R. Mel. They talk of trial. Proofs,

And innocence itself, must sometimes stoop
To foul-tongued calumny. Oh be advised!

Rol. And, if it please my Queen, I will away,
And at the courts of England, France, and Spain,
With fearless tongue, assert the ruling motives
Which influenced your compliance ; and should
any,

With slanderous scepticism greet my errand,
This arm and this good sword shall write the lie,
In bleeding characters, on his foul corse.

Mary. (*giving him her hand to kiss.*) My
page, I thank thee : but the rather now,
As I perforce must sign these instruments,
Serve me by witnessing that not from duty,
Nor of my own inclining, do I yield ;
But from the fear of evils which may follow,
Should I refuse. Call in these Lords again !

(*Exit ROLAND.*)

Sir R. Mel. Your Grace acts wisely.

Mary. That the event will prove.

*Re-enter ROLAND, Lord LINDESAY, and Lord
RUTHVEN.*

Lord Ruth. Madam, we come for your reply.

Mary. My Lords !

Were I on yonder shore, on a fleet jennet,
And ten true knights around me, this poor hand
Should sign my sentence of eternal ruin,
Rather than this concession ; but a prisoner,
Circled with walls and waters, I must bend
Where opposition will avail me not.
But be it witnessed 'tis to force alone
I thus submit myself.

Lord Lind. (*Roughly grasping Mary's arm.*)
Madam, beware !

Think e'er you strive in useless opposition
To us who are the stronger !

Lord Ruth. Shame, my lord !

Sir R. Mel. This is too brutal !

(*LINDESAY looses his hold, and MARY bares her arm.*)

Mary. My lord, you might have spared this woman's arm

Proof so impressive of your mightier strength ;
But well—too well it indicates the terms
On which this business rests. Bear witness all,
That in obedience to the Lord of Lindesay,
Who hath imprinted his sign manual here,
I now subscribe these instruments.

(*She signs.*)

Lord Lind. (*in an undertone.*) I meant no violence ; but women's flesh

Is delicate as new fallen snow.

(*Mary rises, curtsies, and is about to withdraw. Lindesay suddenly advances, drops on his knee, kisses her hand and rises.*)

Lady !

I kneel to Mary Stuart, that most noble
Of all Heaven's creatures ;—not to the Queen
of Scotland !

Mary. The Queen and Mary Stuart, rebel
Lord,

Both pity and forgive thee ; leagued with traitors,

Thou art a good blade in a ruffian's hands :—
Farewell, thou smoother, deeper villain, Ruthven !—

Melville, farewell! Mays't thou find wealthier masters

To give thee richer bribe, than Mary Stuart!

Douglas, inform your grand dame, we desire
To spend the remnant of the day alone.

Roland, some packages which lie at Kinross
Demand your care. Douglas will tell you fur-
ther!

Farewell to all!

(*Exeunt MARY, Lady FLEMING, and
, CATHARINE, at one door, and at the
other, RUTHVEN, LINDESDAY, MEL-
VILLE, DOUGLAS, and ROLAND.*)

SCENE—A village revel—the lake behind—numbers of rustics passing to and fro—Doctor LUKE LUNDIN acting as master of the ceremonies, and busying himself with his white wand.

Lun. (calling to him an emaciated rustic.) How do you, honest friend?

Rus. Very weakly, sir, since I took the electuary; it neighboured ill with the two spoonfuls of pease porridge, and the kirn milk.

Lun. Pease porridge and kirn milk! Have you been under medicine these ten years, and keep your diet so ill? Next morning take the electuary by itself, and touch nothing for six hours.

Rus. I will, sir. (*retires.*)

Lun. (to a lame rustic.) So ho, there, Saunders Darlet, you have been ill, I hear.

Rus. Just got the turn, as I was thinking to

send to your honour, and I am brawly now again ;—it was nae great thing that ailed me.

Lun. Hark you, sirrah ! Remember you owe the laird four stones of barley meal, and a bow of oats. Send no more such kain fowls as you sent last season. They looked as wretchedly as patients dismissed from a plague hospital. Let me see, there is some hard money owing besides.

Rus. I was thinking, sir, my best way would be to come down to your honour, and take your advice yet, in case my disorder should return.

Lun. Do so, then, knave. (*rustic retires,—and boat approaches the shore and lands ROLAND GRÆME. Lundin advances to receive him.*) The freshness of the morning upon you, fair sir ! You are sent, I warrant, to see if we observe here the regimen which her good ladyship hath prescribed, for eschewing all superstitious ceremonies and idle anilities in our revels.

Rol. I have no such charge, doctor.

Lun. Call me not doctor, since I have laid aside my furred gown and bonnet, and retired me into this temporality of chamberlain.

Rol. Oh, Sir ! the cowl makes not the monk, neither the cord the friar. We have all heard of the cures performed by doctor Lundin.

Lun. Toys, sir, trifles ! Marry, heaven sent its blessing—and this I must say, better fashioned medicines have brought fewer patients through. But will it please you enter my poor lodging, and take your morning's cup ; for what saith the school of Salerno.

Poculum mane haustum
Restaurat naturam exhaustam.

Rol. Your learning is too profound for me, and so would your draught be likewise, I fear.

Lun. Not a whit, fair sir—a cordial cup of sack, impregnated with wormwood is the best anti-pestilential draught; and, to speak the truth, the pestilential miasmata are now very rife in the atmosphere.

Rol. I heed them not. After some packages, which should have arrived for the lady Mary, I have come to day.

Lun. Truly, fair sir, they should be here; but John Auchtermuchty, our common carrier, hath not yet arrived. They shall be sought for, and put into your boat. (*A tall old woman, in a high-crowned hat and muffler, passes by, and fixes her eyes on Roland for a moment.*) By the soul of Celsus, it is old mother Nicneven herself:—she hath come to beard me within mine own bounds. (*she goes off.*) Fire and faggot shall one day be her welcome.

Rol. In the name of Heaven, who is she?

Lun. Men call the old hag a prophetess—“I “do scarce believe she could foretel when a “brood of chickens will chip the shell. Men “say she reads the heavens—my black bitch “knows as much of them when she sits baying “the moon. Men pretend the old wretch is a “sorceress, a witch, and what not”—*Inter nos,* I will not contradict a rumour which may bring her to the stake.

Rol. Why would you harm her, if you believe her guiltless.

Lun. Because, fair sir, she hath a heavier guilt upon her ; inasmuch as she haunts the chambers of the sick, giving them trash of herbs and drinks and cordials, thereby disturbing the regular progress of a learned and artificial cure, with her syrups and juleps, and my lady What-you-call-um's powder, and worthy dame Trashem's pill. But no more on't. Mother Nic-neven and I shall meet one day, and she shall know there is danger in dealing with the doctor.

Rol. It is a true word, and many have found it so.

Lun. Amuse yourself, fair sir, with looking on the sports. I must be showing myself abroad. (*Mixes with the throng.* A damsel, closely muffled, approaches Roland, who looks at her earnestly. She beckons him, and he follows her.)

Rol. What wouldest thou, my fair damsel ? Whither dost thou lead me ?—I would I could see her form or face, (*aside.*)

Girl. Follow, and you shall learn.

Rol. (*aside*) There was something in the tone of the voice like Catharine's, yet it cannot be. At all risks, I'll follow her. Tell me your name and lineage. May I not crave as much ?

Girl. You may, but it is a question whether or no I shall answer you.

Rol. Perhaps I know more of you than you think.

Girl. Prove it.

Rol. The first letter of your name may be S. and the last N.—

Girl. Admirably guessed—go on !

Rol. You can switch men's eyes out of their heads as well as hearts out of their bosoms.
 Remove your muffler.

Girl. I may not.

Rol. Then let me follow you to some sequestered place.

Girl. You dare not.

Rol. How? Dare not!

Girl. No. I go to Mother Nicneven's; and she is witch enough to rein the horned devil, with a red silk thread for a bridle, and a rowan-tree switch for a whip.

Rol. Go on; I'll follow you!

Girl. Let it be at some distance, then! (*Exit.*

Rol. Am I always to be the dupe of mystery and witchcraft. At any risk, I'll sift this secret to the bottom. (*Exit.*

SCENE—*Interior of Mother Nicneven's cottage.*

MAGDALEN GRÆME, disguised as Mother Nicneven, seated on a stool, and watching a decaying fire. She clasps her hands, and bends, as in devotion.

Mag. “Droop and decay, thou subtile element;
 “New fuel will relight thy faded embers,
 “And reassure thy brightness: but what food,
 “What kindling touch, can reinspire, once quench'd,
 “The flame of life in this unconscious bosom.
 “We are but pilgrimers on Time's long waste,

" And few, and scattered wide, the resting places,

" Between the cradle and the tomb. Hard care,

" Travel, and withering woes, and midnight vigils

" Have sped me on my way. I see the goal,

" And long to reach it!—But," why comes he not!

Surely, the rustic girl I set to lure him
Hath not deceived me. No, I hear her step.

Enter from door behind, the girl.

Girl. He's close behind me.

Mag. Away, good wench, away. (*Exit girl.*
Enter ROLAND GRÆME, hastily looking around him.

Rol. She has out-witted me, by all my hopes.

Mag. (*rising and advancing.*) What seek'st thou here?

Rol. (*looking earnestly at her, as she takes off the hat which hid her face.*)

I seek—I seek—angels and saints—it is—

Mag. Yes, Roland, the decayed—devoted—feeble,

But never-fainting!—tho' with watching spent,
Still doom'd to watch and wander. Silly boy!
Let not thine eyes chase shadows; her thou seekest

Is but a rustic instrument instructed
To bring thee hither.

Rol. But, resolve me, mother;
How do I see you here? The dame Nicneven
And Magdalen—

Mag. Are one! Since rebel power

Immur'd our Queen within yon dark gray walls,
 Here I have fix'd my home. If I have toil'd
 By day, by night, when the red sunbeam
 scorch'd,
 Or midnight dews fell round ; barefoot and
 lonely,
 If I have struggled thro' the thorny glen,
 Or crossed the tedious hills, which lie between
 Kinross and Kennaquhair—it was to serve
 My earthly mistress.

Rol. " You bewilder me !
 " Could you have called up knights at every
 step,
 " Horsed and accoutred, lances in their hands,
 " And courage in their hearts, it might have
 served her.
 " If woman's breath could batter down these
 towers,
 " Break iron locks, bid massive gates unclose
 " And yield their prisoner ; or, still harder
 task,
 " Melt the heart-hardness of Lochleven's mis-
 tress,—

" Then you might serve her !

Mag. " Those iron locks may break ;
 " Those gates unclose ; armed and accoutred
 knights
 " Rush to the service yet, while the foul trai-
 tors
 " Dream on in false security !"
Rol. What mean you ?
Mag. The hour is come, when I will speak
 no more

In dark and mystic phrase. Know then, my
son,

The friends of Scotland's sovereign are in arms,
And now on thee, the orphan page, the eyes
Of marshall'd armies turn.

Rol. On me, my mother!

Mag. Ay, on thee! for this, these shrivelled
arms,

When, to the howling of the winter's wind,
The forests shook their desolated limbs,
Cradled and cherish'd thee! Child of my hope,
Now my reward is near.

Rol. You forget, my mother.—

Bound, as I am, in duty and in love,
To do all lawful service you, my Queen,
Or Scotland's weal demands; I cannot—dare
not

Betray my trust.

Mag. "Then see thy sovereign perish!

"Nay, at the bidding of the heartless traitors,
"With whom thou leaguest, present the poi-
son'd chalice,

"And be thyself her executioner. False boy!
"So hast thou turned my hope to black despair,
"My wine to gall, my bread of joy to wo,
"As thou hast trampled on my heart's best
wishes,

"Tread my gray hairs beneath thy feet."

Rol. "By Heaven!

"Sooner than scathe shall fall on her or thee,
"This arm of mine shall prove I wear a sword
"For other purpose than an empty show."

Mag. As thou esteemest an honourable fame,

All good men's prayers, and the approving
smile

Of youthful beauty—more than these, my son,
Would'st thou obtain the love of Catharine
Seyton--

Rol. Catharine!—Oh, no! Down, down, am-
bitious heart!

What deed can elevate a nameless man--
A foundling—child of charity--to mate
With high-born maids? Would'st thou pre-
vail, my mother,

Dispel the gloomy mystery of my birth,
And free me from the cold, inglorious load
Which weighs my struggling wishes to the
earth.

Mag. What said'st thou, stubborn boy?—
Would I prevail?

The sword thou wear'st will testify the vow
By which 'twas purchased. For thy birth, suf-
fice it,

When the fit time arrives, thou may'st be found
Companion meet for Scotland's loftiest born!
But, who comes here?

*Enter FATHER AMBROSE, habited as a man-at-
arms.*

Father A. "Salve!" Save you, my sister!

Mag. "Salvete!"

Father A. I sought you, sister Magdalen, and
this youth!

(To *Roland*.) Dost thou not bear a packet from
George Douglas?

Rol. I do; but may to none deliver it,
Without some token of his right to ask it.

Father A. 'Tis well! The packet which I
ask, my son,
Is the report from Douglas to his father.
Will that suffice?

Rol. (*giving the packet.*) It will: (*Father A.*
breaks it open.) What have I done!
Should I have erred in my commission.

Mag. Peace!
Murmuring, suspecting, ever!

Father A. Heaven be praised!
All's well! The time holds for to-morrow
night!

Rol. What time? what holds? have I been
duped--deceived?

Father A. You have my word and token!

Rol. A stranger's word—
It may be, too, a surreptitious token!
I must have better surety, or, by Heaven—

Mag. Rash boy! here, by the love I bore thee
once,
With my own hand I could destroy thee—

Father A. Be patient, sister! Roland, look on
me;
Are these the features of a perfect stranger?
Does this wan forehead, furrowed deep with
care—

This voice, whose wonted greeting or reproof
Cheer'd thy dull zeal, and check'd thy frequent
errors—

Does this changed, faded form, in its swift ruin,
Nor line, nor time retain, nor corporeal motion,
That wakes some sweet responsive chord of
memory—

Some indistinct relationship of heart—

Rol. I am bewildered ! Your manner, voice
and mien

Recall the image—no—no—that cannot be—
Plumed casque, and sword and buckler, wore
nor wielded

That holy man, (*Father A. takes off his casque.*)
Martyrs and saints of Heaven !

(*Dropping on his knee.*) My spiritual father, bless
—oh bless your son !

Father A. Arise, my son ! the Abbot of Saint
Mary's,

When he resigned the mitre and the staff,
Gave back to Heaven the delegated powers
Those outward tokens symbol'd. Yet, my son,
The blessing of an exile fall upon thee.

Rol. Resolve me, father, whence this sudden
change ?

Already is the sheepfold violated,
The shepherd smitten, and his scanty flock
Driven forth and scattered ?

Father A. List awhile, my son !
Scarce had our sister Magdalen and yourself
Left Kennaquhair, and scarce the hollow chime
Pealed thro' the shattered aisles the midnight
hour,

When Morton's minions came. My brother's
power,

Too weak to turn aside the desolation,
Opened a way for my escape ; and now
The forest satyr and the owl inhabit
Saint Mary's sanctuary.

Mag. Eternal vengeance
Wither the desolating fiends !

Rol. Monsters ! (*a pause.*)

But, father, solve the mystery of the packet ;
For whom was it designed ?

Father A. For me, my son ! (*Roland starts.*)
Is not my word sufficient surety now ?

Rol. Then George of Douglas is——

Father A. The Queen's true friend.

Rol. And to his father false !

Father A. To traitors false !

Foul-tongued, and fouler-hearted traitors ! False
Where truth were treason ! Roland—by the
faith

Which leads the erring spirit up to Heaven !—
The orisons for thee these lips have uttered !—
The memory of those moments oft and precious
When I have pour'd instruction in thine ear !—
By the bright lingering spark which yet sur-
vives

Of friendship's sacred flame !—At Mary's
voice—

At Scotland's cry—unsheathe a willing sword,
And lend thy arm to cleave rebellion's crest.

Mag. Listen to her, who, save a mother's
throes,
For thee, hath all a mother's travail known.
By all the love I bore thee, when fierce hate
Pursued thine infant life ! “ By the long wan-
derings—

“ The drops of passion's agony—the groans—
“ The weary hours of wakefulness and pain—
“ Thirst—hunger—faintnesses—which thou
hast caused me !”

Stand for thy Queen !

Rol. Enough—enough, my mother !
Enough, my father ! Here, before high Heaven,

This arm of mine, and this my trusty sword,
I give to Mary's service !

Mag. (*embracing him.*) My darling son !
My pride ! my glorious recompence !—Away !
Waste not the precious hours of preparation !
Prayer, vigil, fasting, are assigned to me,
And I would to my task. (Exit.)

Rol. What task is mine ?

Father A. Pursue her not, my son, but follow
me.

I will unfold our plans as we proceed ;
The day grows old apace, and your delay,
Too long protracted, will excite suspicion.
Come on, my son ; our cause is just and holy ;
To fall in't were a glorious martyrdom—
While to succeed, reclaims our broken shrines,
Restores the throne its rightful occupant,
And gives to Scotland peace.

Rol. Come life—come death !
My faith is pledged ! Henceforth, the foes of
Mary
Are Roland's enemies, and this his watch-word--
A sovereign's freedom and a subject's love !

(*Exeunt Father AMBROSE and ROLAND.*)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE—*An Anti-chamber in Lochleven Castle.*

ROLAND GRAEME and CATHARINE SEYTON,
meeting.

Cath. Well met, my slippery page ! methinks
'twere easier

To grip the subtile wind, than catch thine ear,
And hold it for a moment.

Rol. Your will, fair dame !

Cath. I wish to ask of Kinross—what's the
news ?

Rol. The sports went merrily—the chamber-
lain

Strutted, chid roundly, spouted monstrous latin,
And surgery still more monstrous.

Cath. Pshaw ! what care I

How went the sports—or how the chamberlain
Discharg'd his mimic office ? Saw you none,
Or nothing of more intimate concernment ?

Rol. By the mass, fair maid, I did :—a juggler,
Who with his craft so gull'd the multitude
That the loons swore—nay, lady, frown not thus,
Nor curl your lip with scorn—I saw—I saw
One whom they call'd a witch, and from her lips
I gained dark phrases and ambiguous hints.

Cath. And she was—speak, Roland, speak—

Rol. Yes, lady fair,
She was—a woman.

Cath. Your wit is hasty, sir ;
I grieve I lack the spirits to enjoy it.

Rol. Then, to be serious : confidence, fair Catharine,

Is to be won by confidence alone.

From all this morning's conferences and councils
I was excluded, as one on whom mistrust
Had laid its gloomy interdict. Not alone
The heart in which it dwells, suspicion blights,
But withers where it falls—to foe turns friend,
Creating two-fold desolation.

Cath. Roland !

If aught has been withheld—

Rol. If *aught* withheld !

Was *aught* communicated ? By my sword !—
My sword !—Well thought of, lady ; was it given
For service which becomes a manly arm,
Or to hang idly by my side, till rust
Should eat away its gilding ?

Cath. Hot-blooded youth !

What deeds of thine demand implicit trust ?
And if one foolish person weakly thinks
Thy blood is pure—thy faith—thy honour true ;
And on her proffered pledge, the Queen resolves
To try thy fealty—it perchance were easier
To prove than justify the fact.

Rol. And this friend—

This only one whose kind and generous heart
Did Roland justice—tell me, dearest Catharine,
To whom I owe so large a debt ?

Cath. Nay, Roland,
If your own heart—

Rol. (*dropping on one knee, and seizing her hand,*) Beloved, angelic sweetness !

Cath. If your own heart discover not, I say
 (disengaging her hand.)

'Tis most ungrateful, since the Lady Fleming--

Rol. (starting on his feet,) Fleming ! ungenerous girl ! why mock me thus ?

"The maiden wrought in yonder figured tapestry

"Would sooner quit those ancient walls, and plead,

"Than would the Lady Fleming." Why damp my hopes ?

Why dissipate the vision you created ?

There is but one to whose high estimation

My heart aspires ; and foiled in that ambition,

What are the Queen's or Scotland's feuds to me !

Cath. For shame—for shame—

Rol. Why check my ardour then ?

Why, when the enchantment of a single word

Had won me to the fortunes of the Queen,

Destroy the dear delusion with a breath,

And set my love and loyalty adrift,

Both helm and anchor lost ?

Cath. I could not hear

The cause which kindles every Scottish heart
 Named in conjunction with a selfish motive.

Who serves his God, his country, and his Queen,
 Requires no advocate for woman's love.

She whom he singles out becomes his debtor,
 And owes the recompense her life repays.

Rol. You hold a glorious prize—be mine the venture !

Now by my hope of heaven and thee, sweet maid ;
 Henceforth, the quarrel of the Queen is mine,
 And I'll embrace it to the death.

Cath. Will you ? (taking his hand.)

Will you, indeed ? Oh be but firm in purpose,
 As thou art prompt and bold, and after ages
 Shall hail thee Scotland's saviour!—But the
 Queen!—

Enter QUEEN MARY and LADY FLEMING.

Mary. (as she enters, much agitated,) Chafed!—Grant me patience, heaven ! Wasn't not enough To rob me of my child?—These are rare times, When helpless infants are set up to thrust Liege mothers from their thrones !

Flem. Madam, be calm !

Mary. Talk not to me of calmness ! can the doe See the fierce tiger fasten on her young, And yet, with all her impotence, be still While the red massacre goes on.

Flem. My Queen!—

Mary. Then I am still a Queen ! so well, my Fleming !

[During the latter part of this conversation, Catharine advances to the Queen, bends her knee, and gently taking her hand, kisses it. Roland places the chair and footstool, and steps back. Mary sees Catharine.]

Ah ! is it thou, ma petite mignone.

Cath. Daughter of many kings, this youthful 'squire,

Thro' me, makes tender of his hand and sword!

(she beckons Roland, who advances.)

Come, Roland, bend with me, before your Queen And offer your devotion.

(*Roland kneels beside her.*)

Rol. Gracious sovereign !

Unknown as yet in council or the field
 I have no skill to boast, but heart and hand,
 In faith and bold devotion unsurpassed !

Mary. (Giving one hand to Roland, and with the other arranging the locks on Catharine's forehead,)

Alas ! that you should mix your fates with mine !
 And yet not so ! thro' you, Heaven bids me hope.
 Oh, faithful pair ! should we resume our throne,
 Shall we not have one day of blithesome bridal,
 Of which nor bride nor groom must now be
 named ?

But he Blairgourie's barony shall have,
 And 'midst her locks shall twine the fairest pearls
 Lochlomond's depths have ever yielded ; and
 thou,

Yes thou, my Fleming, shalt, for my love, twine
 them ! (*Roland and Catharine rise.*)

*Flem. Alas ! my Queen, your thoughts stray
 far from hence !*

*Mary. They do ; but is it well to call them
 back !*

I will recal the vision : at that bridal,
 Mary shall lead a measure. Tell me, Fleming,
 For care hath marr'd my memory—at whose
 wedding

We threaded last the merry *branle* ?

Flem. Alas ! my queen !

Mary. What ?

Not help me out ? Thou art court-bred, my
 Fleming ;

And best wilt understand another language—
 The Queen commands thee to remind her where
 She mingled with the merry dancers last ?

Flem. Gracious Queen ! if I err not, at Holy-rood—

The marriage of Sebastian !

Mary. (shrieks.) Traitors ! Would'st slay thy sovereign ? Call my French guards !

A moi—a moi—mes François ! I am beset !

Oh ! they have killed my husband ! rescue ! rescue !

For Scotland's Queen !—We'll take the field ourself !

Warn Lothian—Fife—Saddle our Spanish barb ;
And bid French Paris charge our petronel !
For better, as our grandsire fell at Flodden,
To perish in the field, than, like our father,
Die of a broken heart !

Cath. Be patient, madam !

(*To Lady Fleming.*)

How could you call to mind her husband ?

Mary. Husband ! what husband ? not the heir of France !

He's ill at ease—he cannot mount his horse !—
Not him of Lennox ! No, 'twas Orkney's Duke !
Bid him come hither, quick, and bring his lambs,
Bowton, Black Ormiston, and Hay, of Talla,
And Hob, his kinsman ! Fie, how swart they are !
And how they smell of sulphur !

Rol. My gracious Queen !

Mary. What ! closetted with Moreton ! Nay,
if't be so—

If Douglass and the Hepburn hatch together,
When the bird breaks the shell, Scotland may tremble !

What says my Fleming ?

Flem. Wilder and wilder still ?

'Twere better we support her to her chamber.
These paroxysms are not of long duration.

Mary. Ha ! ha ! ha ! I said it would not fit ;
That crown was made not for so small a head—
Give him a diadem of—oh !

(Overcome with fatigue, sinks into the arms of
Roland, &c. who bear her off.

SCENE.—*A Chamber in the Castle.*

Enter GEORGE DOUGLASS, as in deep thought.

How heavily move the hours which step between
The birth of hope and its maturity.

Minutes like months, and months like ages creep,
As if their wonted wings were featherless,
And time itself stood waiting for the issue.

Old Dryfesdale is sick—should Ambrose come
He must hold watch ; and that will aid us well—
He has the pass-word and the Douglass token,
And cannot meet obstruction. Who come's here ?

Enter ROLAND GRÈME.

Roland ! welcome, my friend ! For by such name
Upon the Abbot's faith I give you greeting.

Rol. The noblest of the house of Douglass
honours
Whom thus he greets. How looks our enter-
prise ?

Doug. It wears a face of promise, if the father
Deceive us not. Yet still one obstacle
Remains to be o'ercome.

Rol. Name it, Douglass.

Doug. The castle keys ! To night, our lady
mother

Herself retains them : and without their help
Our schemes must prove abortive.

Rol. Methinks
A little skill I have in handicraft
Will serve us here. Oft at the armourer's forge,
In Avenel Castle, I amused my hours
In making iron toys. Some sundry keys
I have with my apparel, which, with skill
Combined, might pass unknown to sharper eyes
Than boasts Lochleven's lady.

Doug. Most excellent !
Prepare them instantly : the night advances :
In half an hour the curfew will be rung :
And at the Douglass mother's evening visit,
The keys must be exchanged.

Rol. Be that my care.
This night shall bring my skill and sleight to
proof. *(Exit Roland.)*

Doug. The page has proved a notable ally.

Enter LADY LOCHLEVEN, followed by a servant.

*Lady L. (as she enters,) A man at arms ! And
from Sir William Douglas !*
*(Seeing Douglas,) Well found, my son ! (to ser-
vant,) Go, and conduct him hither.*
A servant recommended by my son,
Demands admittance to our presence.

*Re-enter servant, followed by FATHER AMBROSE,
and exit servant.*

Your name, good fellow ?

Father A. (bowing,) Edward Glendinning.

Lady L. Art of the Knight of Avenel's blood ?

Father A. Aye, madam.

Lady L. 'Tis well: by his own works and
worth approved

From low condition he hath raised himself
To rank exalted. Welcome is his kinsman !
Doubtless, you follow the true faith ?

Father A. Doubt it not.

Lady L. Hast thou no letter from my son ?

Father A. None, Lady !

A private token, merely.

Lady L. I would hear it.

In what does it consist ?

Father A. An old bard's words—

"O, Douglas, Douglas !
Tender and true."

Lady L. Aye, trusty Sir John Holland; kinder
heart

Ne'er prompted minstrelsy: the Douglas honour
Was ever on his harp-string. Glendinning !

Fearest thou the night air ?

Doug. Not a jot. I'll warrant !

He comes in happy time, my lady mother,
To fill the vacant space of Dryfesdale.

Lady L. But trust him only with the outer
ward,

'Till from our son we gather more of him.

Father A. Lady, fear not : I shall fulfil the trust
Your honoured son reposed in me.

Lady L. I doubt not.

My son, conduct him to the buttery ;
Let much be made of him. (*curfew tolls.*) I must
away ;

The tolling of the curfew summons me
To do a hateful duty.

(*Exeunt at separate doors.*)

SCENE.—*The Queen's anti-chamber.*

Enter ROLAND, with a bunch of keys.

Rol. Kind saints are thinking of me, by the mass!

These are the Castle-keys' nice counterfeit ;
As ponderous and as rusty too. Smile on,
Propitious fates ; and, at the morning's dawn,
We'll trip it on the greensward merrily.

(*Puts the keys in his pocket.*)

Enter CATHARINE, from the inner chamber, with a lamp.

Cath. Repose and silence have restored the Queen.

Roland, well met ! Ascend that balcony,
And instant place this lamp within the window,
And tell what lights reply across the lake.
My bosom tells me we shall see two gleams.

(*Roland takes the lamp and exit, then re-appears at the window with a light.*)

Two lights are seen to glimmer on the distant margin of the lake.

Rol. I see two lights ; and if I rightly guess
They gleam from old Blinkhoolie's cottage windows.

Cath. Right, Roland, and like saint Elmo's lights, in storms,
They kindle hope and consolation.

(*One light is extinguished.*)

Rol. See,
One of the lights is out.

Cath. Oh, say you so !
The hour of freedom is at hand—come down.
(Roland descends and enters.)

The boat has left the shore.

Rol. Propitious saints !
Invest it with a sevenfold shield of night.

Enter QUEEN MARY and LADY FLEMING.

Cath. My gracious liege, heaven prospers
our designs.

The signal of deliverance gleams. Yon light
Proclaims our friends already on the lake.

For God's sake, madam, droop not now !

Mary. Alas !
My mind misgives that I shall die in bondage.
How can we cheat or bribe the dragon who re-
tains

The keys of this our prison ?

Rol. Call up, my liege,
The hundred spirits of your kingly sires,
And bear yourself with fortitude. These keys,
If Catharine will beguile the lady's ear,
Shall be the substitutes of those she bears,
And then the door of liberty is open.

Mary. Oh, Roland Græme, how many have
proved false !

Be true to me in this my hour of need.
A soothsayer in France foretold me once,
That I should die in prison. Heaven forefend
That his prognostic should be now fulfilled !

Cath. Oh, are you not a queen ? and wer't
not better

To die in one bold struggle after freedom,
Than wither in the heat of poisonous drugs

By some base hands administered ?

Mary. It were !

I will be firm, and bear me like myself.

This awful venture claims my utmost courage,
But I will be prepared.

Cath. Timely resolved ;
For see, my liege, here comes our lady hostess.

[Enter LADY LOCHLEVEN and servants, bearing dishes, who place them on the table and exeunt. Enter servant with a white wand, bearing the keys, which he lays on the table, bows and exit. During the first part of the conversation which ensues, the lady is occupied in tasting the various dishes.]

Mary. We may not mourn the smallness of our court

When in herself our hostess thus unites
The offices of Almoner and Steward,
With captain of our guard.

Lady L. Not inclination,
But prudence, let me say, necessity,
Hath deck'd me with this triple character.
Old Dryfesdale is bedrid.

Mary. And George of Douglas—

Lady L. Feels such repugnance to approach
your grace,
(And much do I commend his wariness)
That for this evening I have given consent
He may excuse himself.

(She is about to take up the keys.)

Rol. Holy martyrs !
What lights illume the church-yard---
Or do some fancied glimmerings cheat my sight ?

(*Lady Lochleven turns about, Roland quickly changes the keys with a slight clash.*)

Lady L. (Turning hastily round) Who touched the keys?

Rol. Twas my coat sleeve, my Lady! I pressed too rudely forward.

Lady L. (Taking up the keys and again looking from the window.)

These gleams, methinks,
Come from Blinkhoolie's window, not the church-yard.

I wonder much what thrift the gardener drives,
That thus, of late, his house is lighted up
Beyond his usual hours!

Rol. Lady, perchance
He works his baskets!

Lady L. Or his nets—what say you?

Rol. Aye, madam, like enough, for trout or salmon!

Lady L. Or fools and knaves! No—no—this must be looked to.

I thought him an industrious, peaceful man;
But if he harbours idle men—night-walkers—
We must be rid of him. Good night, your Grace!

To-morrow old Blinkhoolie shall attend us.

(*Exit Lady Lochleven.*)

Rol. (After a brief pause.) To-morrow! Aye—let idiots cry “to-morrow,”

While wise folk use to-night. My gracious liege—

Now if our friends on shore are brave and faithful

All will go well :

Cath. They are as true as steel :
Fear not, so that our dear and royal mistress
Maintain her noble courage.

Mary. Doubt not me :
The woman's weakness I have cast aside,
And roused the spirit of those sprightlier days,
When, with my armed nobility encircled,
I longed to know the weight of sword and
buckler.

Cath. The lark lives not a gayer life, nor
sings
A blither carol, than the merry soldier.
Your Grace, I trust, shall be among them soon ;
And the Queen's presence, in the time of need,
Shall make their host and power of triple
strength.

Rol. So please your Highness to retire a
moment,
While I hold parley with the sentinel,
And see the boat in readiness—anon,
Expect me, and prepare to summon up
Your utmost courage for the final struggle.

Mary. If thou deceive me, Roland !—No—
no—no !
Thou would'st not kill thy Queen !—away, brave
youth !

I will attend thy summons.

(*Exeunt, Queen Mary, Catharine, and Lady Fleming into the inner room, and Roland to the gates.*)

**SCENE.—Outside of the Castle Walls—The Lake,
and a boat, with rowers lying sheltered under
one of the towers.**

Father AMBROSE, as a Sentinel.

The moon has sunk beneath yon southern hills,
And all is hushed in silence. My throbbing
heart

Lie still! Down, anxious thoughts, and hasty
terrors!

An injured Queen is Heaven's peculiar charge,
And every fear is impious.

(*DOUGLAS advances from the boat.*)

Doug. No tidings yet!
What if young Græme should fail to change the
keys?

Father A. Oh, doubt him not! The hour is
most propitious:

Would he were here!

Doug. I do believe him true:
But we have left too much to chance, methinks.
He can but seize the occasion—not create it.

Father A. Methought I heard the grating of
the wards.

[*Enter ROLAND cautiously opening the gate.*]

Rol. Hist, Father! hist! Are all things ready?

Father A. All

The boat, my son, lies close beneath the walls:
The rowers rest upon their oars. Be speedy;
No time should now be lost.

Rol. Expect us promptly.

(*Roland re-enters the gate.*)

Doug. Another moment and the stake is won!
And Douglas for a hopeless passion yields

Fortune and friends, and fame.

Father A. Not so, young man !

Thy fortune shall be Mary's charge; the friends
Thy loyalty shall win thee, far outnumber
The tale of those thou losest, and thy fame
Shall be the care of graetful ages !

Doug. For good or ill, my lot is cast with
Mary.

Re-enter ROLAND with Queen MARY, CATHARINE, and Lady FLEMING.

Mary. Support me, Roland, for my trembling
limbs

Feel weak and weary. Where lies the boat ?

Rol. Courage, my Queen ! One effort more
for freedom.

Doug. Under the islet lies the boat, my liege,
Safe from the warder's ken.

Mary. Heavens ! a soldier !

Am I betrayed at last.

Ambrose. (Kneels) My Queen, my mistress !
Your faithful Ambrose has exchanged the staff
And cowl and mitre, for the glittering steel—
Alike your priest and soldier.

Mary. My Father :

Your presence is the surety of success.

Your arm. My trusty squire, lead Catharine
forward ;

Douglas, let Fleming be your charge !

Ambrose. (As they retire towards the boat.) My
son,

Who holds the inner watch of night ?

Rol. Hildeband :

A heavy headed knave, who drinks and sleeps

Too deep to let our converse interrupt him.

(They arrange themselves in the boat, but just
as the rowers are about to push off

Rol. (Leaping ashore) I have forgotten—wait
but half a minute.

(He runs to the gate, opens it, and disappears.)

Doug. What means the page?

Mary. Heavens! Is he false at last!

Catharine. No, true as Heaven itself, I will
maintain.

(During the conversation, the boat is pushed
off from the shore, before Roland returns; who
re-entering locks the gate, and with a spring,
reaches the boat.)

Doug. That dash will wake the sentinel.
Row, lads!

The castle boat will soon pursue us.

Rol. Fear not!

When I ran back, I locked both gate and
wicket;

If doors of oak and iron bolts can hold.

Nor man nor boat stirs thence to night. And
now,

Good Kelpie, take possession of the keys

(He throws the keys into the lake.)

Father A. Bless thee, my son, thy prudence
saves us all.

(A cry from the castle walls “a boat!” “a
boat!” “Treason!” “Treason!” The bell
rings—a shot or two is fired—as the boat is
lost sight of, shouts are heard, “they have
escaped!” “they have escaped!”)

SCENE.—*A Scottish encampment, night.*

ADAM WOODCOCK *as a Sentinel.*

Oh! that my mother's son should ever have left the peaceful practice of falconry, to handle a harquebuss! What a prostitution of talents! Any loon or idiot can shoulder a gun, but a knowledge of falconry is a vocation known to few. The night air is cold, and—alas that I should say so!—there is neither beef nor brandywine to fly to for succour against the damps of this devilish low land flat. “To my thinking, a soldier's is a miserable occupation: not “to mention long marches, and wet and cold, “and wet heather for a bed, and cold iron for a “pillow, which are hardships enough in their “way; he has to encounter those worst of all “evils for a goodly constitution like mine, frequent abstinences from meat and drink and “wholesome slumber.” Who goes there? stand or I'll shoot you.

Enter LUKE LUNDIN cautiously.

Lundin. Friend! Friend Sentinel!

Adam. Your business? Nay keep off the length of my harquebuss, unless you have any good cordial in that pouch of yours.

Lundin. Cordial, friend. Verily I have an elixir which operateth *tuto, cito, jocundo!*

Adam. I never heard of that liquor before: and lest it should be poison, my spy o' the camp, you shall even take the first pull at it yourself.

Lundin. That is an anomaly in our practice,

friend, nevertheless will I oblige the. All ma-ladies, from your *tussis* to your *pestis* walk abroad in the night air. Dost thou not know that I am a son of Hypocrates ? (*Drinks.*)

Adam. Is he a pagan papist, or one of the reformed ?

Lundin. (*Taking the flask from his lips and handing it to Adam.*) Reformed ! What said you of reformed, my son of Mars ? Ah, I see ; thou hast discovered that I am a physician ! Thou hast sagacity ! True, we have much reformed the practice. Esculapus was a mere blunderer, and Galen an ignoramus compared with our modern school. What think you of my double-distilled *aqua mirabilis* ? *probatum est* !

Adam. I like the liquor better than the name of it. And now, friend, pray inform me what is your business here. If you want patients, you'll find plenty ; for this cold marshy land has given us all agues and asthmas.

Lundin. Agues and asthmas ! excellent ! I have a most perfect knowledge of diagnostis, since I see with half an eye what disease you are sick of ; and as for remedies, I have them all at my fingers' ends. But *apropos*, friend, who commands here ?

Adam. Lord Lindesay of the Byres ; and with him Lord Ruthven and Sir Halbert Glendinning, knight of Avenel, and far renowned for his famous falconer. You will soon have an opportunity of seeing them, for I have orders to take every stranger before them. So if you would escape the hangman, get a good story ready.

Lun. Thou art a pestilent fellow, to talk to me of the hangman. My business is with thy masters. I have important matter on which to commune with them ; and when thou shalt discover, saucy knave, in what estimation they will hold me, thou will be convinced, to thy cost, that the physician's quality may not be jested with.

Adam. Out of gratitude for thy cordial, I will not prick thee with my poniard, nor pinion thy hands; so thou observest a fit decorum, and keepest by my side.

Lun. Prick or pinion me at thy peril, thou inveterate swash-buckler. If my degree cannot protect me from the insolence of the illiterate vulgar, it may suffice to bring down punishment on those who undervalue it. *Pedestrify!*

Adam. I don't understand your trash of surgery-sounds.

Lun. Walk, sirrah ! Or as the vocabulary of war hath it—march !

Adam. Thou art a wag ; and for thy waggeries I could desire to crack pottle with thee hereafter ; so the hempen collar crack not thy neck, in the mean time. Come along, thou cracker of jests, as well as constitutions.

Lun. If we should drink together, it must be cordials of mine own distillation ; inasmuch as I am no friend to the fiery admixtures and potations which the tavern hosts drench their customers withal ; and which are mischevious to bodily sanity.

Adam. Come along, my fine fellow, we'll not quarrel about the distiller, so we get the essence.—March.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE.—*Interior of Lord Lindesay's tent.*

LORD LINDESAY, LORD RUTHVEN, and SIR HALEBERT GLENDINNING, at a table.

Lord L. Be it so my friends : we break up
with the dawn,

And pitch our tents still nearer to Lochleven.
The Regent's letters say the Hamiltons
And Seytons have been missed from Edinburgh.

Sir H. That looks suspicious.

Lord R. They are men who sleep not ;
And when their clans are out, our swords, be
sure,
Will not have time to rust.

Enter ADAM WOODCOCK and LUKE LUNDIN.

Lord L. What have we here ?

Adam. A wandering gentleman, my lord,
whom I picked up while strolling about the edge
of the camp. I thought him a spy, he denied it ;
and as he says he is a physician, and can cure
asthmas and agues, I am bound to believe him.

Lord L. Who are you—and what seek you
here ?

Lun. First, my lord, for such I take you to
be from your own aspect, as well as the report
of this *anguis in herba*, who lay in wait for me,
my name is Luke Lundin, of Kinross, better
known as Doctor Luke Lundin, until I laid aside
my furred gown and bonnet, and retired me
into the temporality of chamberlain, which I
enjoy under the favor of the Lady of Lochleven.

Lord L. Lochleven ! Come you from that
quarter ?

Lun. Yes, my good lord, and being a good friend to church and state, as it is now established, I journeyed hitherward to your camp to commune with you, as to certain diagnostics of a suspicious nature, which I have lately noted.

Lord L. Be brief, knave or chamberlain, or what thou art, and tell us what thou hast observed.

Lun. I have noted men in arms loitering about our town : more especially at a recent revel which was held there, I did observe divers of this class mixing in our sports, and I do mistake me if I saw not, under a muffler, the countenance of a Seyton.

Lord L. The game is sprung, my friends : the chase is up

Good fellow, thou shalt have promotion.

Adam. (*aside to Lundin,*) Comrade, we will drink together anon.

Lord L. What more canst thou communicate.

Lun. But little more, my lord, save that there is a witch, who hath long loitered about the town to the prejudice of good morals and the disadvantage of my faculty, and her do I suspect of colleaguing with rebels, inasmuch as armed men have been watched to go in and out of her abode, and even now she is missing altogether.

Lord L. She shall feel fire and faggot. Go thy way,

And get refreshment. Look to him, soldier : Anon, we may converse again.

(*Exeunt Adam and Lundin.*)

Lord Ruthven

There's treason in our front. The page, Sir Halbert—

That boy of thine, we hear, has been suspected.
Thy brother Edward too, the would-be-abbot,
Let them look to't !

Sir H. Why this to me, my lord ?
My faith stands high—my service unimpeached.
Their own heads answer for their truth or
treason.

Lord R. Even so, Sir Knight, we know thy
courage well.

Let it not chafe thee that Lord Lindesay's heat
Somewhat o'erstepped his courtesy.

Lord L. I meant not
To impute unworthiness to Avenel's knight.
My hand ! And now to business : methinks, my
friends,
'Twere well to march at dawn.

Sir H. Why not before ?
Our troops are fresh !

Lord R. Why not within this hour ?
West Niddrie, where the Seytons have a castle,
Is scarce six leagues before us. Ere the dawn,
We may o'ercome three leagues !

Lord L. Agreed, my friends !
With all my heart agreed. This looks like vigour !
Now to your different posts, and thro' the camp
Let the shrill trumpet wake the drowsy bands ;
Strike all the tents, and let our prompt array
Outstrip the lazy night. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE.—*A room in Lord Seyton's castle. A row of arches behind : beyond which is seen an oratory ; in one part of which ROLAND GRÆME is seen leaning against a pillar, in*

a moody posture. On the other side GEORGE DOUGLAS is seen reclining in the recess of a window, his back against the wall, and his arms folded.

FATHER AMBROSE, LORD SEYTON, *nobles and officers.*

Lord S. Father, how fares the Queen ? With
the young day,
We must to horse again.

Father A. She bears it well :
Hope buoys her spirits, and the air of freedom
Gives more than natural vigour to her frame.
But see, she comes !

Enter QUEEN MARY, LADY FLEMING, and CATHARINE. *The nobles bow.*

Mary. Thanks, noble, generous friends ! The
debt I owe you
Claims a more liberal recompense than words :
And, should I reach the top of Fortune's wheel,
I'll throw aside her bandage, and with gift
Large as a sovereign's power, reward your ser-
vice.

Which way resolve your councils we should
take ?

Father A. So please your majesty, to Dra-
phane Castle,
Thence to Dumbarton, and your royal person
Placed in security, it is proposed
To take the field.

Mary. When do we journey, lords.

Father A. We purpose, should your Grace's
strength permit,

To take horse presently.

Mary. Your will is mine :

We rule our journey by your wisdom now ;
And hope, hereafter, to command its aid
To guide our kingdom's councils. Make all ready ;
And I'll attend your summons.

(*Exeunt Lord Seyton, nobles and officers.*)

(To Catharine,) Where's my page ?
George Douglas too ? What keeps them from
our presence ?

Cath. They are in yonder oratory, madam,
In melancholy mood enough.

Mary. Indeed !

This may not be. Go, call them hither, girl.

[*Catharine retires to the oratory, and returns with Douglas and Roland, who advance on each side the Queen.*]

Say, Douglas, how is this ? Why does the friend
Who first devised this happy scheme of freedom,
And aided to achieve it, strangely shun
His fellow nobles and indebted Queen ?

Doug. Madam, the nobles who surround you
now,

Bring wealth and vassals to support your cause ;
Castles of might, and splendid halls are theirs,
To make you welcome and secure—but I—
I am a houseless, solitary man,
Cursed, disinherited, disowned and poor,
My sword—my life—is all I bring !

Mary. Douglas !

Would you upbraid your Queen, by thus re-
counting

What, for her sake, you have surrendered ?

Doug. No, Heaven forbid ! were it to do
again

And I had rank, and wealth, and friends to lose,
 Exceeding twenty-fold what I have lost
 All would I gladly give :—but yet, my liege,
 I am a Douglas ; with the nobles round you,
 In feud, my family have been for ages,
 Coldness from them were insult, still more
 galling

Greetings of hollow kindness.

Mary. Douglas, for shame,
 Shake off unmanly gloom. In wealth and title
 Mary can match thee with the proudest noble.
 Go then amongst them, I command.

Doug. My liege,
 At that command I go. Yet not for wealth
 Nor barren title have I ventured all :
 Mary, alas ! will not reward her victim,
 And the Queen cannot ! [Exit.

Mary. Our lady pity me.
 No sooner are my prison sorrows ended,
 Than all a woman's cares beset me. Alas !
 Poor Douglas ! (*sees Roland*) How now, Roland
 Græme ! This morning,
 Why thus neglectful ? Has your last night's
 ride
 Prevented your attendance ?

Rol. Madam, not so !
 I have been checked, insulted, put aside ;
 Lochleven's page, it seems, at Niddrie Castle,
 Is page no longer. Churl's blood may not sit
 Where these proud Seytons breathe.

Mary. Who waits there, ho ? [Enter Servant.
 Send my Lord Seyton hither ! (*Exit Servant.*)
 By my crown !

I'll have my page sit down with Scotland's noblest.

Enter LORD SEYTON.

My Lord ! Look on this youth ! Wer't not for him,

Spite of your goodly show of spears and lances,
Mary had still been 'prisoned in Lochleven.
Give him your hand !

Lord Sey. With all my heart, my liege.
I owe him that good will for former service,
When in an evening brawl his trusty weapon
Redeemed me from a villain's stroke.

Mary. How, then,
Is he repaid with slight and contumely ?

Lord Sey. He makes pretension to my daughter, madam.

I am the servant of your Grace's throne,
My goods, my castles, and my blood, are your's.
I must retain my honor's custody,
And as its guardian, I pronounce a Seyton
Can be no more to him, than any churl
Who dares to ask her.

Enter (suddenly from behind the shrine) MAGDALEN GRÆME.

Mag. Of what clay then art thou,
That the Græme's blood may not be blent with thine ?
Know this, proud Lord, this youth owes his descent
To Malise with the bright brand, Earl of Strathern,

Boasts this hot blood of your's a higher source ?

Rol. Kind Heaven, I thank thee !

Lord Sey. But, my Sainted Mother !

His father's name—

Mag. Julian of Avenel, Lord !

Who fell in glorious fight against the Southron.

There is a wandering spirit of the air,

Whose evidence, at some besetting hour,

Shall second mine ; and at her mystic coming

A cloud shall rise before Glendinning's sun,

And shroud its borrowed beams for ever.

Mary. Did I not say, my page should sit with nobles ?

And Catharine shall repay him for his fealty !

Lord Sey. Pardon, my liege, if tale be rightly told,

This Julian was a perjured knight ; and she

A frail and credulous maiden !

Rol. (*grasping his sword*) By heaven thou liest ! (*relaxing his grasp*)

No—you are Catharine's father !

Mag. (*to Roland*) The packet, boy !

(*Roland takes a packet from his bosom, which he gives to Magdalen.*)

Thou hast preserved it well. See here, my queen,

The attestation of my daughter's marriage,

With him of Avenel, "by Sacristan Philip,

" Lodged with the Abbot Boniface !

Father A. True, madam ;

" Under confession's seal, the Sacristan

" Placed this testificate in lawful hands.

" The Abbot had obtained from Julian Avenel

" A promise to proclaim his secret marriage,

“ And all the private causes which concurred
 “ To its concealment, when the hand of death
 “ Prevented its accomplishment.”

Mary. Enough!

The tale of sorrow often have I heard.
 And was it then thy hapless child, who followed
 And died upon the body of her lord ?
 And art thou he, my son, that heir of sorrow,
 Who, 'midst the dead and dying, first inhaled
 The breath of life ? Thou art the Seyton's equal !
 And much good service thou hast done me.

Mag. To that great work did I devote him. I,
 Whose agency and counsel oft inspired
 Your fainting servants. The last, lonely hope
 Of a decaying house I kept not back.
 What should be *my* reward, descend *on him*.

Mary. “ You will not leave us, mother ! You,
 to whom

“ So much we owe !

Mag. “ My ministry is ended.
 “ You are free : by gallant lords surrounded ;
 “ May they prove trusty as the faith of women !

Lord Sey. “ Go not, 'ere we have to know and
 thank you.

Mag. “ Her, who knows not herself, you can-
 not know.

“ Oh ! times there are, when in this frame of
 mine

“ A Sampson's vigour reigns, and in this brain
 “ Wisdom surpassing human ;—then again
 “ The mist is on me, all my strength decays,
 “ My wisdom sinks to folly.—Cardinals,
 “ Princes—aye Princes of Lorraine, have heard
 me,

" And bowed before my words. But now, alas !
 " When most I need persuasion, words come
 not."

Mary. " Pause not for eloquence, but speak
 thy wish

" And, at the naming only, see it granted."

Mag. (*seizing Roland's hand, she leads him to
 to the Queen, makes him kneel, and
 bending herself one knee.*)

Princess, look on this flower ! A stranger pluck-
 ed it

From the red field of slaughter. Long it was
 Ere my arms pressed this relic of my daughter.
 Yet, for the sake of our eternal faith, and your's,
 I left him to the care of strangers—enemies,
 To whom his blood had been as choicest wine.
 Scarce have these eyes beheld him, from that day,
 Save in a few brief hours of doubt and dread.
 And now I part with him again for ever !

Rol. We will not part ! Your few remaining
 years

My filial love shall soothe. (*attempting to rise.*)

Mag. Nay, rise not yet !

My son, these eyes shall rest on thee no more,
 My travail is not yet accomplished ! Queen !
 For every weary step I made for you,
 Protect this child, no longer mine !

Mary. I swear,

His happiness and fame shall be our charge !

Mag. Daughter of Kings ! I thank you,
 (*kissing the Queen's hand, and Roland's brow—rising*)

I have done !

Earth, thou hast had thine own ! And now, high
Heaven

Demands the rest ! Go, Scotland's Lioness !
Go forth and conquer ! Many a distant shrine
These knees shall press for thee ! From land to
land—

Temple to temple—where my country's name
Has yet to be pronounced, this form shall glide
Like an untiring ghost, till the pale priests
Shall ask, in wonder, of that northern queen
For whom the aged pilgrim prayed ? Farewel !
Honour, and earthly power, and peace be thine !
Let none pursue me—my resolve is fixed—
My vow cannot be broken ! (*exit rapidly after a
moment's glance at Roland.*)

Rol. My mother !

I cannot lose thee thus ! (*he attempts to pursue,
but is prevented by Lord Seyton and Fa-
ther Ambrose.*)

Father A. Press her not now !

Or she is lost for ever ! "Many a time
"Have we beheld her at the needful moment.
"But never will she pardon him who breaks,
"Uncalled, upon her privacy. Unthwarted,
"We may again behold her."

Mary. Now, my lord,

I trust that Mary may command your aid
To execute her last request.

Lord Sey. What, madam,
In the protection of my gallant second ?
My hand upon't ! Since, in his youthful veins,
No churl's blood hath a place, when the time
suits,

He shall not lack our friendship.

Mary. Nor our smile !
 No longer Græme, but Avenel be he called ;
 And if heaven prosper us, the barony
 Shall quickly call him to lord.

Rol. And I will give it
 To her who holds it now—my kind protectress !
 For rather landless would I be for life,
 Than rob my second mother of a rood.

Mary. Thy mind is noble as thy birth ! But
 now,

Another subject claims us. My Lord Seyton,
 We wait your summons : yet my boding heart
 Is sick with apprehension.

Lord Sey. Courage, madam,
 Behold your friends.

[The trumpet sounds, the scene draws, and discovers the troops all drawn up, with banners and music. Drums and trumpets play a flourish—the banners are lowered—and officers salute, and soldiers present arms. The queen curtsies. Exeunt, through the lines, the queen and her ladies, Lord Seyton, Father Ambrose, and Roland ; the ranks closing after them, and marching off to the sound of music.

SCENE VIII.—*The Country.*

Enter LORD LINDSAY, and LORD RUTHVEN meeting.

Lord Lind. Your countenance speaks news,
 Lord Ruthven,

Lord Ruth. Then it speaks truth, my lord ;
 our foragers,

Within this hour, fell in with a detachment
Led by young Seyton ; after transient skirmish,
Our men retreated to report the news.

Lord Lind. Call in our outposts, and the ex-
tended wings

Promptly concentrate. Wary are our foes,
And would not, I bethink me, on weak grounds,
Venture thus far into the country.

Enter SIR HALBERT GLENDINNING, hastily.

Sir Halb. My lords, our vanguard, from yon
mountain top,

Have noted squadrons swarming o'er the vale,
Covering, like locusts, all the goodly lands.

Lord Lind. 'Tis as I thought. Yet what may
be their object ?

In what direction move they ?

Sir Halb. This way, my lord.

Lord Lind. Then, by our cause, there's some-
thing serious in't !

I trust the queen has not been freed !

Sir Halb. I fear it :

For there is rumour, though I failed to trace it
Up to its origin—that in the centre
Of the strange legions which advance upon us,
Closely begirt by men of noble garb,
Some females ride.

Lord Lind. Is't so ? Is't so indeed !

Then many a gallant form which drinks the
morn,

And blithely vapours in the early sun,
Evening shall mantle on the blood-drenched
earth,

A stiffened corse. On the lake's brink we'll wait them.

[*exeunt.*]

Enter ADAM WOODCOCK, and LUKE LUNDIN, armed.

Adam. Friend physician, if thou be'st no better handler of limb-lapping instruments, and surgery knives, than thou art of gun and sword, thy seven years' apprenticeship to thy craft was time dead lost. Out upon thee, carry thy gun upright!

Lundin. I wish I was back at Kinross, curing dyspepsies, and dropsies, and gout, and jaundice. What do I know of fighting, except warring against plague and pestilence.

Adam. I see thou knowest nothing of it, and my skill is ordered to illuminate thy ignorance. I heard but a minute ago a whisper about a battle before the day is over.

Lundin. Esculapius, Galen, Machaon, Hippocrates, Celsus, and all the learned tribe defend me from your battles. I had as soon submit to copious phlebotomy, and quarts of boiling water six times a day, as stand in the front of a loaded harquebus, even in the hands of a friend; but to come face to face with a bloody minded enemy—it will be my death.

Adam. And the death of many a bolder fellow. "if I were disposed to complain, as thou dost, I might grumble at being compelled to exchange falconry for fighting, and killing feathered game for shooting and maiming my fellow creatures : but what would it avail me?"

Come along, knave doctor, or the rear-guard will pick us up.

Lundin. I little care who picks us up. "I have but little inclination to walking with this heavy appendage of steel or iron, or what metal it may be; and this monstrous broad sword clanking against the ground at every step I take." Oh! that I were in my own medicine chest.

Adam. I would rather be in a hot battle, much as I dislike the smell of gunpowder, and the sight of blood, than be stewed up amidst so vile a society of compounds and chemicals. If I escaped death by swallowing your poisons, the smell would surely end me.

Lundin. A pestilence light on thee, thou profane knave, for speaking lightly of our thirst.

Adam. And drugs and doses drench thee for as clumsy a loon at handling arms as ever was cast upon a field of battle. Come along, sirrah, carry your harquebuss upright.

DUET.—Tune "*Ha! ha! the wooing o't.*"

Adam. Hector long'd to meet the foe!
Step firm my doughty boy!

Luke. Only one such fool, I know,
He liv'd and died at Troy.

Adam. Hector was a Campbell free—

Luke. Stay—stay—thou ill read dunce,
Homer gives his pedigree,
Troy's prince and general once.

Adam. How the de'il should Hector know!
I ken'd the scoundrel weel—

Better Scotsman ne'er, I trow,
Pitch'd tent or handled steel.

Luke. Verbum sat ; I see it now—
Thou prov'st thyself an ass.

Adam. Sirrah !

Luke. Nay, nay, my friend, not so—
Shake hands, and let it pass.

(taking out his cordial.)

Whether Trojan fool or Scot
Pledge deep—

Adam. With all my will,
Whether Homer lied or not—
We'll drink together still.

Both. This is pleasant drink enough,
One draught makes sadness gay—
One more—there—that's *quantum suff.*—
Quick march ! Away ! away ! [Exeunt.]

SCENE IX.—*Another view of the country.*

Enter QUEEN MARY, LADY FLEMING, CATHARINE, ROLAND, FATHER AMBROSE, DOUGLAS, LORD SEYTON, NOBLES, and OFFICERS.

Mary. What may these tidings mean ?

Father A. My royal mistress !

Soon we shall be encountered. Even now
Our enemies intercept us. The line of hills
Along our front is occupied by troops.

Mary. Is there no way to escape ?

Douglas. Escape, my liege !

Were the assembled rebels ten to one
We might give ground—to falter now were treason !

What says Lord Seyton ?

Lord Sey. Battle ! Battle !

Douglas. What, Lords and gentlemen !

All. Battle ! Battle !

Douglas. We'll drive the rebels from their
'vantage ground,

As the hound turns the hare.

Roland. From yon high summit
Our onset shall dislodge them.

Father A. Noble lords !

Better prevent their gaining that advantage
Our road lies through yon hamlet on the brow ;
Who gains it first, wins an important post.

Mary. Well said, Lord Abbot ; Douglas,
hasten thither !

Swift as the wind our foes approach it.

Douglas. My queen,
Thanks for the post of honour ! Instantly
The pass shall be secured. I fly to seize it.

Lord S. Not before me, young Douglas. Hold
I not

Charge of the vanguard ?

Doug. Before you, my lord,
Or any man, follow me, gentlemen,
You, who by deeds of glorious enterprise,
Would show your loyalty ! Draw your bright
blades—

For Scotland and the queen !

[Exit, followed by several nobles, &c.]

Lord S. And follow me,
My noble kinsmen and my faithful tenants,
They who first gain the post, shall win the glory !
God and the queen !

[Exit, followed by the rest of the nobles, &c.]

Father A. Oh ! most unhappy strife !
Ill-omen'd haste ! since from the Southern shires
I have returned, I find these heated lords,
Before so wise and thoughtful, rash, rebellious,

'They will be met full soon.

Rol. So mnch the better :
My cradle was the gory field—

Father A. Beware !

Beware thou make it not thy couch of death !
What yonder men are whom you now despise
This day may teach you to your cost !

Rol. What are they ?
Is their flesh iron ? Are their sinews wire ?
Will not lead pierce, or sharp steel cut them
 down ?

Father A. "Bad men they are ; but war re-
 quires not saints !"

Lindsay or Ruthven's back who ever saw ?

Mirkaldy is no craven ; and my brother

(Ill arm'd in such a cause) hath scanty rivals !

(Firing heard.)

Mary. The battle rages ! see the Seyton's
 banner !

Cath. Oh ! father—brother ! Peril hems you
 round,

While I remain in safety !

Rol. Would to heaven

This arm of mine was with them—and my blood
 Could ransom theirs !

Cath. Do I not know thy wish ?
Can woman say to man what I have said,
And yet suspect his soul of fear ?

Mary. Roland !

Advance some paces to the topmost ridge
And say how goes the field ! [Exit *Roland*.]

With us, I trust !

Let what but ills surround me !

Father A. Many a soul,

In these loud thunders wings its way to heaven,
Or bends it flight to hell ! Join me in prayers
For triumph in this dreadful strife !

Mary. Not here !
Oh father ! Pray not here, or pray in silence.
I cannot here compose my harrassed mind ;
Or if you pray, be it for me !

Re-enter ROLAND.

Rol. My queen,
This spot grows less secure. The fight comes
nearer !
The Hamiltons are routed, and a squadron
Of horse ascend the hill.

Mary. Where can I fly ?
Conduct me as you please ! My star is dim !
My gay hopes vanish like a morning dream !

(Firing.)

Rol. Haste, madam ! Let us lead you to your
steeds !
The danger nears us. Yet, you are unseen,
And may escape 'till fate relents !

Father A. Madam—
Cheer up ! Forget you are a woman now,
And be a queen !

Mary. I must forget much more :
Your arm, Lord Abbot, I submit to heaven.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE—*The country.—A lake with a bridge on it. In the foreground a holly bush. Firing heard.*

Enter LUKE LUNDIN, with his sword drawn, in great terror.

If there be any agents appointed to protect the faculty, let them cram me into a gally-pot, stop me in a phial, or do any thing they please with me, so they get me safe and sound out of this infernal field. Zounds, here is somebody coming. (*hides behind the bush.*)

Enter ROLAND GRÆME with his sword drawn.

The day goes hard with us. Of our brave troops
A third already have been slain or taken.

Enter LORD SEYTON, pursued by three soldiers.
Roland attacks one, kills him, and assails the second, who, with the other flies.

Lord Sey. A second time thy debtor, noble youth!

After the battle should we both survive,
I will repay thee amply.

Rol. I joy, my lord,
That this poor arm hath rescued you. But see
The fight demands our presence.

[*Exit Lord Seyton.*

As Roland runs off, enter ADAM WOODCOEK, who attempts to stop him, but is instantly struck to the ground, and exit Roland.

Lund. (coming from the bush.) Zounds, what gunpowder fellow was that? and yet if my memory serves me, it was the page who tasted my cordials the other day at Kinross. (sees Adam.) Ah, here lies my pestilent tutor: before he attempted to teach me the use of arms, he should better have studied them himself. O ho, I may have a little of my *aqua mirabilis* left, I will administer to him. (he pours some down Adam's throat.)

Adam. I owe thee a good turn for this. I believe I am not wounded: this is not the first time I have felt your arm, Master Roland, though I little meant to meet you there. Help me off the field, friend, this is no tarrying place for cracked crowns.

Lund. Nor uncracked ones neither, if they have any brains in them. [Exeunt.

Enter SIR HALBERT GLENDINNING and GEORGE DOUGLAS, meeting.

Sir Hal. The Queen! Where is the Queen?

Doug. Here, by her champion!

Sir Hal. Be valiant, then, or by my sword, thou diest!

Doug. Be that as heaven determines! For the Queen!

They fight—*Douglas* is wounded and falls.—Enter ROLAND, who assails Sir Halbert. Sir Halbert's foot slips, and he falls. Roland stands over him. The whole body of the two armies advance in opposite directions, charging

juriously, the bridge is covered. At this instant a parley is sounded. The soldiers suddenly stop in the attitude of charging. On one side Queen Mary, Lady Fleming, Catharine, Father Ambrose, and Lord Seyton, enter hastily. On the other, Lord Lindsay and Lord Ruthven. Mary. The English warden, in his sovereign's name,

Hath offered truce, safe conduct and a welcome,
If from this bootless conduct I retire,
And quit this troubled land. Now be it known,
And at the word, let all contention cease,
I grasp the offer. Let the warden's boat
Approach the shore.

(*a boat approaches with a flag.*)

Father A. Do you leave us, madam :
Then Scotland's sun is set. Unhappy Queen,
Blinded, deceived, betrayed !

Mary. (*sees Douglas.*) Whom have we here ?
Alas ! Look on that face—look there, and tell
me—

Shall she who ruins all who love and serve her,
Make further struggles for a fleeting glory.
Thus has it been with every one who loved me—
Francis and Chatelet, gay Gordon, Rizzio,
Darnley and Bothwell, and, the last of all,
Devoted Douglas ! Importune me not—
I will resist no longer.

Rol. Leave not your heritage, devoted Queen !
True men turn rebels to your will to save you.
Let us withstand by force.

Mary. Roland, 'tis now too late :
My page—my knight, farewell. Catharine, come
hither !

Seyton, your Queen's last act is this—

(*Joins Roland and Catharine*)
Father,

Your blessing, and farewell. Thanks, thanks to
all—

One struggle more, and this sad scene is ended—
Adieu, my native land !

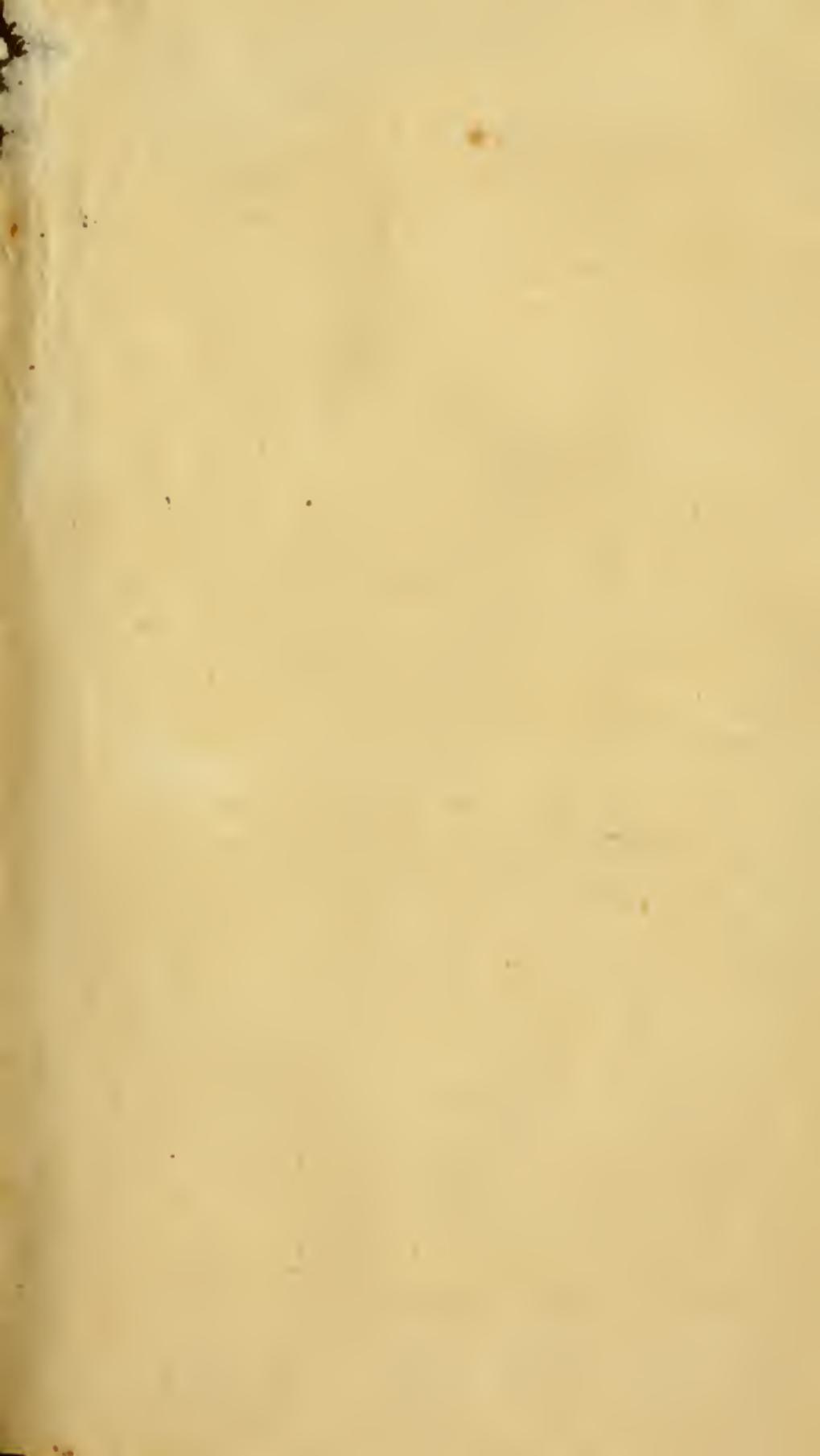
The English wardens hand the Queen to the boat : and as she steps on board, the holly bush suddenly opens, and the White Lady of Avenel steps out of it. Ske advances a few paces, and addresses Sir Halbert Glendinning.

Knight, no more the holly wear,
Avenel claims its rightful heir.

To Rol. Manly page and youthful knight,
Halbert's wrong is Roland's right.
From the holly, from the well,
Come I without sign or spell ;
Now my wizard race is run,
Now my wizard work is done !

She re-enters the holly bush, which sinks through the stage, to slow music, and the curtain drops.

THE END.



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